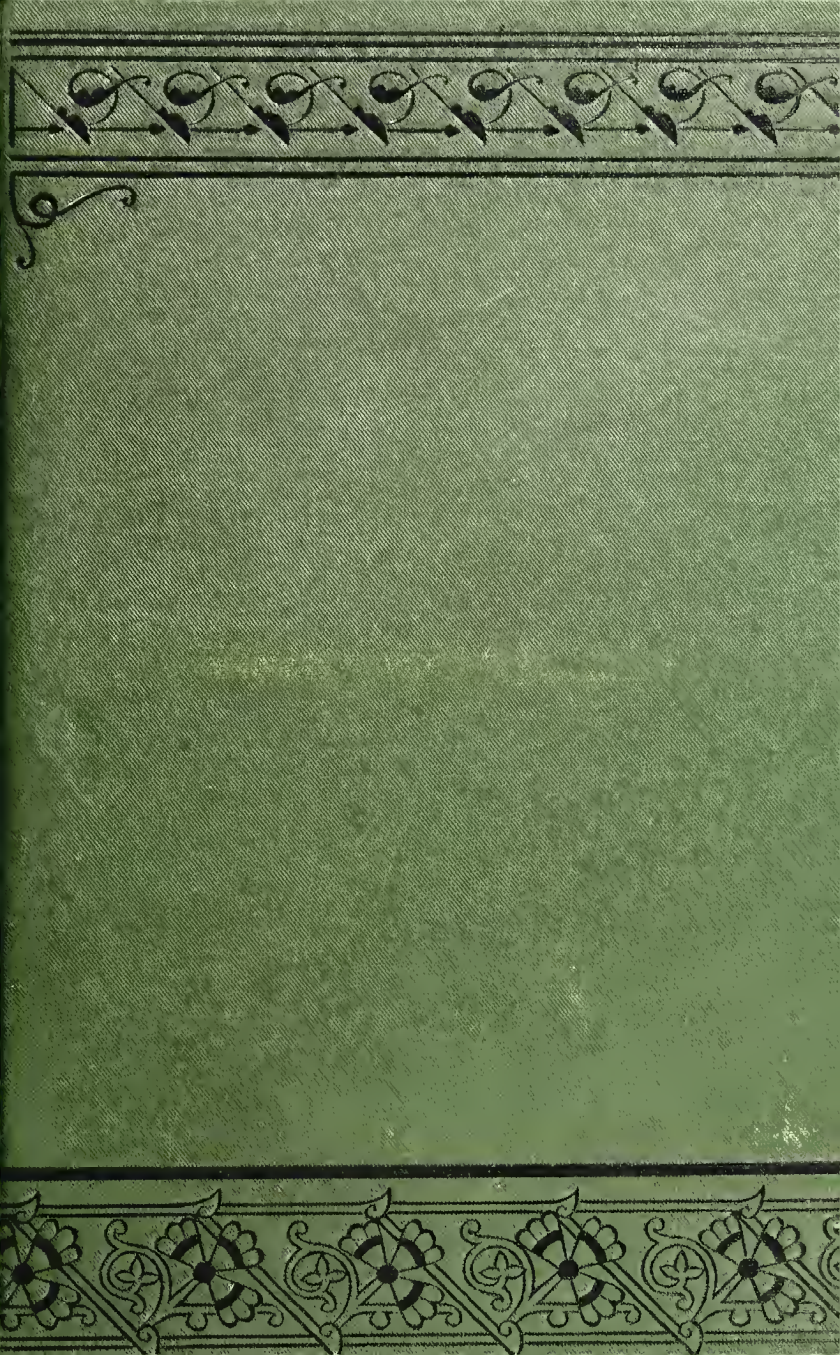




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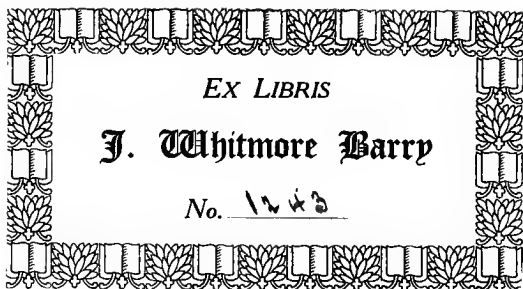
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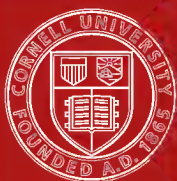
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AN EPITOME
OF
MODERN EUROPEAN LITERATURE.

BY
MRS. FRANCES C. HENDERSON.

SECOND EDITION.

PHILADELPHIA:
J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO.
1883.

TO

A. S. B.,

THE "COUSIN ANNA" WHO CAN VOUCH FOR THE ACCURACY OF
PRISCILLA'S PORTRAIT,

THIS BOOK

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

BY HER AUNT,

F. C. H.

PREFACE.

MY object in publishing this unpretending volume is simply to place a sort of bird's-eye view of modern European literature within the reach even of those who have but little time to devote to reading. I would also gladly share with others the pleasure I have myself derived from following the divers trains of thought pursued by writers born in various climes, schooled in languages of such varied idiomatic construction, and growing up under dissimilar social habits. In the languages which are but little known I have been able to select those authors who stand as leaders in the foremost rank,—such as Kisfaludy for Hungarian, Pushkin for Russian, etc. In German and French, which everybody knows, it was much harder to choose. Nobody would thank me for giving one of Racine's tragedies or one of Molière's comedies, as these already have a place in every library; neither could one reasonably expect me to crowd one of George Sand's or Victor Hugo's three-volume novels into the seventeenth part of a twelvemo. Even there, however, I have been able to select works which had never been translated, and which are in some degree characteristic of the country to which each belongs.

I would gladly have given specimens of Bulgarian and Wendish and some of the Romanese and Rouman, but I was not able to find anything but some ballads, already translated. Turkey is not represented, for two excellent reasons: one is

that I do not understand Turkish, and the other that Turkey is connected with Europe solely by her geographical position, —her literature belongs to the East. Greece has also been left out, as it seems almost a sacrilege to give specimens of the modern literature of a country whose classical works are household words in every land.

In conclusion, I would say to any one who thinks I ought to have done more that it would have been pleasanter to write two volumes (or four) if I had thought any one would be willing to buy a work of such dimensions.

If it be objected that the specimen of English literature was not even written by an Englishman, I would reply that it is, nevertheless, more characteristic of England than anything I could have *selected*. England has always identified herself with the slavery question in one way or another. After *forcing* it upon her colonies she was the first to preach a crusade against it, and still combats it wherever it exists. She also set the world the noble example of emancipation.

F. C. H.

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I.

PRISCILLA BAKER, THE FREEDWOMAN.

BY MRS. FRANCES C. HENDERSON.

It was in the autumn of A.D. 1869 that I first saw Priscilla Baker. Madison she should have been, but she was a widow when she married Phil, and, having changed her maiden name for that of Baker, she deemed it unseemly to change it again, and Baker she remained to the end of her life.

Priscilla was worthy to have found a "Boz" to chronicle her sayings and doings, but, as no abler pen has undertaken to transmit her name to posterity, I must assume the task. But first let me assure my readers that I am portraying no imaginary characters, and that every word put into the mouth of a negro was uttered, not only by *some* negro, but by the very one to whom it is ascribed. I shall make no attempt to weave them in consistent patterns, and not even imitate the immortal Plutarch, who, putting speeches into the mouths of the great men he delineates, has given us heroes without blemish and without weaknesses; but, as a painter, giving us a picture of "an Alpine cow drinking," puts in for a background a few mountains and a glacier or two, so must I, in order to word-paint Priscilla accurately, make a background of "the white folks" she loved so well, and throw in my humble self, my husband, and my dear little girl.

It was as a bride that I went to my lovely Louisiana home, and that I first saw "freedmen." I am Southern born, but I had lived inland, and in a cotton-growing region, and knew nothing of negroes fed as "pickaninnies" upon sugar-cane and syrup, or of the life on a sugar plantation. Ours was on the

"Côte Joyeuse," so called on account of the joyous hospitality reigning there before the war. That has now passed away, and the dancing and frolicking have ceased, but nature remains the same.

It was with wonder and delight that I saw in our own park oranges, the size of small cantaloupes, hanging in clusters, like cherries, on the trees, and a small plantation of banana-trees displaying their mellow fruit. Everywhere the luxuriant sugar-cane waved its broad blades in the wind with truly tropical nonchalance, and seemed to invite the knife of the cane-cutter, but the private cotton-patches of the negroes surrounded the sugar-house, and looked very pretty with the red, blue, and yellow flowers on the same stalk with the ripe bolls, out of which the cotton had burst with the brilliant purity of freshly fallen snow. It was sundown when we arrived, and the negroes, having stopped work, were standing at the doors of the neat, whitewashed cabins in "the street," as they call the rows of cabins. A number of little negroes, having stripped their own pecan-trees, had invaded the park, to gather the nuts lying on the ground there. The last rays of the setting sun still lingered on the fence, which was brilliant with the deep yellow of the Bois d'Arcé, or bitter orange, intermingled with the large white flower of the Cherokee rose. This fruit is so bitter that no animal will touch it, and it hangs on the trees till late in the spring. Near the house were stately camellia-bushes, covered with a profusion of flowers, and scarlet pomegranates.

I never tired of watching from my boudoir window the broad waters of the Mississippi, where steamboat followed steamboat, the black smoke being seen behind the bends of the river long before and long after the boat itself was visible. The steamboat whistle was a constant amusement, and when the triple sound was heard, announcing that the boat meant to land, there was a general move to our landing-place, which was just in front of the park gate. Sometimes freight was to be put off for us, sometimes the boat-clerk had been asked to leave a letter, which we should thus receive more promptly than through the post-office, and sometimes a party of visitors from New Orleans or Donaldsonville, or some other place on the river, would step off the landing-bridge and tell Moses to bring up their bags.

On such occasions Priscilla Baker was sure to come sneaking round to ask if there was not some job of extra work for her to do. She had never been one of the house-servants, and, in fact, had never done anything. When she was a young girl, she was walking on the levee on a Sunday afternoon with some of her young friends, when her first husband, who was then courting her, called to them to wait for him. They ran off and the lover ran after them, and, overtaking them, caught his lady dark by the leg, and held on so tightly that he pulled her hip out of joint. Inflammation set in, and, in spite of care and medical skill, Priscilla remained lame, always walking as if one leg were shorter than the other, and so delicate that she was never asked to do anything. After emancipation her husband found out she could work, as he said "he was not going to have any niggers playing'possum (pretending to be ill) round him, and if she wanted to eat she must work."

"The house" was the great attraction to Priscilla, and she was constantly coming round to ask if I would not give her a pound of coffee, or a couple of pounds of sugar, or some tea, as she had the toothache, and Aunt Judy says "she ain't got none to spare."

Aunt Judy was my head-cook. She had in her youth been cook at President Mouroe's, and had the quiet dignity of manuer she had then admired in the President of the great republic. It must have been her account of the grandeurs of the White House (delivered to the under-cook, Ann Taylor) which so impressed Ann's husband Nat. It had worked upon his imagination till he firmly believed he was destined to be President himself some day. He was a lazy, trifling fellow, and began his political career by-haranguing his fellow-servants and trying to make them discontented with their position, and to keep them from working. A favorite expression of his was, "The best of us can make mistakes." He had made quite a serious one-himself, as it was strongly suspected that, having found a flat-boat moored to the bank, under the charge of a small boy, he had thrown the boy into the river, and a log on top of him to help him to swim. At any rate, the boy was drowned, and a gun which had been taken from the boat, was found buried under the floor of Nat's cabin. Nat swore he had found the gun lying on the bank, and nothing could be proved against him.

But to return to Aunt Judy. She was a splendid cook and a sort of patriarch on the plantation, as ten of her sons were among the field-hands. Alfred Gant was the leader of the whole force (under the white overseer), and Edmund Gant was the leader of the hocs. Judy fell ill and had to give up work; she was wasting away. One day Priscilla came to me and asked if I would lend her a side-saddle, which was kept for the use of the house-servants, as she wanted to ride "to Aunt Judy's funeral." "What!" said I, "is she dead?" "Oh, no," replied Priscilla; "but the doctor says she cannot last long, and Alfred and Edmund is a-digging of her grave." "Digging her grave before she is dead!" cried I, with horror. "Oh, yes," said Priscilla; "they thinks a heap of old Judy, and wants her to be comfortable-like. They is digging mighty deep."

Sure enough, Judy did die in a day or two, and needed her deep grave, and I stood on the veranda to watch the funeral procession. Now that dances were no more every funeral was a festival; but none so great as old Judy's. The overseer had granted a full holiday, and all the cane-carts were in the procession, filled with negroes, old and young, laughing and chattering like monkeys. Every negro who owned a riding-horse could be seen on it, digging his heels into its sides to make it "cut up," and all the private buggies of the negroes could be dimly seen through the clouds of dust raised by the Jehu-like driving of the owners. Everywhere shone the brightest colors; the women were attired in red and yellow head-handkerchiefs and shawls, and the men in equally gaudy neck-handkerchiefs, with gilt watch-chains dangling from their button-holes. All were in the merriest humor, and all felt that night that Aunt Judy could be quiet in her grave, as due honor had been paid to her remains.

During Judy's long illness her daughter was told to send to "the house" for anything she fancied to eat, and the quantity of delicacies she was supposed to swallow would have sufficed for a regiment. My surprise was great, however, when, two days after the funeral, some children came to ask for something for "poor old Judy." "Why," said I, "she cannot eat anything now." "Oh, but we can," was the ready reply; "we's her grandchildren, and she sot store by us, and 'pears like she'd be glad to know we was eating it." I did

not agree with them, and sent them away empty-handed, and disappointment would probably have darkened their countenances if it had been possible for the greasy, shining little faces to be any blacker.

The excitement of a baptism was perhaps even greater than that of a funeral. We had a colored church on either side of us, both holding the fundamental doctrine that it is sinful to steal from the members of one's own congregation, but differing in ritual. The minister of the church above us preached in a black coat; the one below us fancied a white surplice, and had more of wordly wisdom than falls to the lot of most persons. Whenever there was to be a baptism, Rachel, the house-maid, would come and ask for whatever wages were owing her, as she said the plate was always handed round at a baptism, and the minister said they must "frow in" handsome to pay his expenses to New Orleans to have the baptism registered! These negroes could have set an example of liberality to many a small white congregation. They paid their ministers a salary of nine hundred dollars per annum, beside "frowing in" whenever the plate was passed, and when he proposed to put up a new church building, they contributed so liberally that said minister was able to run off to Europe with five thousand dollars in his pocket belonging to his congregation.

It was towards building this new church that my cousin Anna, who was spending the winter with me, sent a gift of ten dollars, by Priscilla, requesting her merely to say that it came from a lady from the North. At the close of the usual service the preacher said, "And now, brethren, let us pray for that angel from the North who sent us the ten dollars." And then, as Priscilla reported, "there was such groaning, such groaning," and for a long time we teased Anna about the groans she had wrung from the freedmen. This groaning is their way of joining in the services, or of expressing their approval of the sentiments uttered, etc.

The congregation above us, on the river, was also filled with zeal and emulation, and undertook to build a frame church. When it was nearly finished it burnt down one night, and, as the fire was evidently the work of an incendiary, it was generally reported that the minister of the lower parish had tried by this means to rid himself of a rival.

But to return to the baptisms. One day Priscilla said to me, "Miss Julia, you should go down to the river to-morrow to see the baptism. Henry Williams is to be baptized, and he's mighty strong; he'll fight hard: it'll take leastways three men to hold him. There'll be such groaning, such groaning; there hasn't been such groaning since Miss Anna gave them ten dollars."

Henry was the strongest man on the plantation, and could lift a barrel of flour (two hundred pounds) and carry it on his shoulder with as much ease as most men would shoulder a gun. He did fight hard. Though four men tried to hold him he pulled the minister down under the water (they were standing in the Mississippi), and held him there so long as nearly to prevent him from ever officiating again at a baptism.

These struggles are supposed to represent the efforts of the devil to retain the soul which is about to escape from him by baptism, and to prevent the ceremony, and the groans of the bystanders are thought to be a powerful aid to the good cause. The candidates for baptism are clad in white,—the man in white trousers and smock, the women in flowing gowns. The negroes are all Baptists, in so far as they always baptize by immersion, and only adults. They enjoy the excitement accompanying this ceremony so much that the strong men and even women, who fight well, have been known to be baptized on three or four different occasions, the devil apparently highly valuing bodily strength and seizing the athletes again and again.

One day Priscilla said to me, "Miss Julia, you are going to have a surprise to-morrow." And a surprise it was. I was awakened the next morning by a clear, merry voice singing Lord Lovell and divers plantation songs directly under my window. I hastened to dress myself, and opened my window. Jim Black was singing his best songs for me and looking as smiling as he always did. Jim was a curiosity. He earned good wages, but was not willing to waste any part of them on clothes, as he had been used to having them furnished by his master. He gave a portion of his earnings to his short, dumpy wife, and she and her six round-faced children looked quite respectable, but Jim's garments were a marvel of skill and industry in patching. They were nothing but patches; patches of every shape and hue were there,

but not a piece to show what the original material could have been. Jim felt easy and comfortable in them, as he said "nothing could hurt them clothes;" and if there should have been a rent, the supply of patches and patience was evidently inexhaustible. A weak point in Jim's character was his disinclination to cut wood for his own use. He did not object to cutting wood when he was paid a dollar a cord for cutting, but to cut wood for his wife to burn seemed to him a waste of energy, so he preferred to steal the wood piled up for the sugar-house. The negroes were allowed to cut as much wood as they wanted for their own use, and to use the plantation teams to haul it to their own doors, but many of them preferred to take their supplies from our wood-pile.

One night as my husband was returning from a neighbor's he saw Jim Black take a large log from the wood-pile and carry it to his cabin. He did not say anything to him then, but the next day, while the negroes were sitting together during the hour of rest, my husband said to them, "Boys, I saw a spirit last night." The excitement was tremendous. The negroes all believe in spirits and often profess to have *met* one, but never to have *seen* one. The spirit blows on them in passing and fills them with horror, but here was some one who had seen a spirit. With one voice they asked what it looked like. "Like Jim Black, and it had a big log of wood on its shoulder," was the reply, which elicited shouts of laughter from the crowd. Negroes are keenly alive to a joke, and, Spartan-like, they think theft is only disgraceful if it is found out. Jim, being taken on a second occasion for a spirit, was ridiculed so unmercifully by his fellow-laborers that he could not stand it. To our regret he left the plantation with his wife and children, sinking thus from the rank of "one of the old families" to "a hireling."

It was some time before I understood the full meaning of "a hireling." My washerwoman being ill, I told Priscilla (who did the errands) to go over to Major C——'s and see if Frances would come over for a week to wash and iron. "Oh," said Priscilla, "Miss Julia, don't get her: she is only a hireling." "Well," said I, "so are you." "Oh," said Priscilla, bridling up and putting on an air of severe dignity, "*we* are all good old families." Then I found that, though the Civil Rights' Bill was passed because the Constitution says "all

men are equal," the negroes had already formed an aristocracy of their own. Those who remained on the plantations where they had worked as slaves were called "old families," and those who had sought work on other plantations were called hirelings, and looked down upon by the others.

Priscilla's love of talking secured for me a good deal of information. One day she came up to sell some eggs, and said, "We are soon going to have a wedding: Albert Lockett is going to get married." Albert was the second engineer at the sugar-house, and, getting high wages, was considered *un bon parti*. "Poor fellow!" said I, "he was married only a month ago; is his wife (a young girl of sixteen) dead already?" "Oh, no," said Priscilla; "he did not get married then: he took Lizzie to his cabin for a week and tried her, and he did not like her, so he sent her home to her father. They mostways takes them home for a week on trial; but this time he is going to get married sure." The wedding took place: a great deal had been expected, as Albert was considered a rich man, but it was very tame compared with what they used to be in slave-times. Then the mistress furnished the refreshments, the music, and the wedding-dress. All the "black ones" far and near were invited, and as Saturday night was always selected for the festivity, they danced "till broad daylight." The bride opened the ball in a low-necked white dress, with a wreath of orange-blossoms on her woolly head. Now every housekeeper objects to wasting her own stores of flour, sugar, eggs, etc., in entertaining her friends. The utmost stretch of hospitality now is a quilting, where, as Priscilla says, "they must earn their supper; not one bite do they get till the quilt is finished and put away." So the number of invitations is limited to that of those who can get round the one or two quilting-frames, as the case may be.

As my washerwoman died, and Frances was not considered worthy of a place in my household, I engaged Lucy, one of the "old families" on Major C——'s plantation. He was our next neighbor, so Lucy continued to occupy her own cabin there and (though getting her supplies from us) went home to eat. All the negroes raise their own chickens, geese, and eggs, but Lucy's appetite for the latter article seemed to be unlimited. If any of my hens stole her nest anywhere, instead of laying, as in duty bound, in the hen-house (where the

nests looked so inviting, each being whitewashed, filled with clean straw, and adorned with a china egg), the nest was robbed daily. Two hens had from time immemorial quarrelled about a self-made nest behind the wash-house door, and a third had lately put in her claim; but, though there was a tremendous cackling, like a shout of victory, three times a day, not even a nest-egg was ever to be found. It seemed certain that Lucy must have fried eggs every day with her bacon, but when I dropped a gentle hint as to my own fondness for new-laid eggs, Lucy's look of injured innocence placed her above suspicion.

One day Priscilla came in breathless, and said, with a very solemn face, "Miss Julia, I am thankful I never made a practice of stealing." "I certainly am," was my reply; "but what has happened?" "Oh," said she, "Aunt Lucy's sins have found her out," and then she stopped, sighed, and looked more solemn than ever. Pretty soon she recovered so far as to relate that our gardener, who also lived on Major C——'s plantation, had, on coming to his work early in the morning, found old Lucy lying stiff and cold in the path. She was dead. A nearly empty whiskey-bottle clasped in her stiff hand showed plainly what had been the cause of her fall and her inability to rise again; but what seemed to Priscilla the climax of iniquity was that in a gigantic pocket on each side, under her dress, was one of my hens with her head wrung off. "Yes, Miss Julia, as sure as I'm a-standing here, there was old speckle in one pocket and topknot in the other, and the black hen ain't nowheres; I 'xpect she put her in the pot yesterday. "But where did she get the whiskey?" said I. "Oh," said Priscilla, "those peddler-carts are bad things; one blew his horn yesterday while Lucy was washing, and she said she must have some blueing. I reckon she bought the whiskey then."

Priscilla could speak from experience of the temptations of peddler's carts. At any time if I was giving her an order when the horn blew she would say, "Please, Miss Julia, let me run down: I want to get a spool of cotton." As Priscilla did not make much use of her needle, it seemed strange that she should need so much thread, but I found out accidentally that the peddler charged enough for his thread to allow him to throw in a drink of whiskey, and when

Priscilla returned with the thread her eyes always looked as if she had been swallowing something very strong.

It was old Lucy who, finding that Cousin Anna, like most Northerners, would take a good deal on trust, tried to make her believe that her old mistress had had thirty-seven children. "Oh," said Anna, apologetically, "are you sure? That seems a great many." "As sure as I'm a living woman," replied Lucy, "old missus had thirty-seven children; and if you don't believe me I can tell you their names." "Oh, do!" said Anna; "I should like to hear them." So Lucy began: "There was Master Tom, he died during the war; and then there was Master John, he has the plantation now; and then came Master David, he is a lawyer and lives in New Orleans; and Master Harry, he took the fever and died; and Miss Lizzie, she is married and lives in Plaquemine; and Miss Mary, she lives along with her, and that's all." "But that only makes six," said Anna. "Well," replied Lucy, unabashed, "those are all the names I can remember just now, but there were thirty-seven."

One day Priscilla informed me that John Bryan was at the steps and wished to speak to me. I went out on the veranda, and saw John, a picture of misery, holding at arm's length by the back of the neck a kitten that was spitting and scratching like a little fury. "I have brought a *pet* for little missy," said John, glancing sideways at the little tiger. I wished to release the poor little animal from its uncomfortable position, but John screamed in terror, "Don't touch it, Miss Julia! don't touch it! it'll scratch you to death; it's one of them wild ones from the sugar-house." I did take it, and, to John's surprise, as soon as it felt the touch of a loving hand it curled itself up and began to purr.

John was our carpenter and a good workman, and his wife, Cora, was a notable, stirring woman, but they had trouble in their family. Their oldest son, a lad of twenty, was so worthless that we could not allow him to stay on the plantation. Indeed, all those who grew up during the war or since are, to say the least, idle and ignorant. There is no one now to teach them to work. With slavery the quarter-gangs and the half-gangs have passed away. In the former a stout boy was made to do the quarter of the work of a grown hand, and as he grew older and stronger he was

put into the half-gang, where he was expected to do one-half of a man's work, and it was to the owner's interest to have them taught to do it well. Unfortunately, no philanthropist has yet been found able and willing to teach the freedmen, or rather the freed boys, to work. Plenty are ready to teach them to read and write; but, as John said while complaining of his sons, "in the schools they only learn devilment," by which he meant that they learned to look down on their parents, who do not know how to read and write. In Germany they have industrial schools and agricultural schools, where boys can, between the morning and afternoon sessions (and after the latter) of the public schools, which they are obliged by law to attend, earn two or three cents a day, and where they are taught to work, and kept out of mischief. The freedmen cannot get over their former contempt of "a poor white man," so that the ordinary school-teachers exercise but little moral influence over them. A remark made by the freed coachman of Rt. Rev. Alex. Gregg, bishop of Texas, describes their feeling on this subject so accurately that I cannot refrain from quoting it here. He was saying something about "master," when a Northern man, who overheard him, said, "Why do you call him master? You are as good as he is, now that you are free." "That's a lie," retorted the freedman; "I am as good as you any day, and better; I was that before I was free; but I ain't good enough to black master's boots."

The negroes have not the patience to teach their children to work, and when they undertake to correct them they do it without measure or mercy. One day I wanted Elijah, a boy whose duty it was to drive up the calves morning and evening at milking-time. Priscilla spoke up: "I just now see'd him going down to the river, and I 'xpect he's going to get a whipping, for I see'd his mother going after him with a big long pole." Yes, they are too apt to take a long pole to punish their children.

Any man who would open a model farm without any idea of making money, and employ the half-grown hands and teach them to work, would be a real benefactor to the community at large.

Priscilla and her husband Phil had their troubles also with their children. Phil Madison was our cooper. He made all our sugar-hogsheads and molasses-barrels, and made them

well, hut the oldest son (a Baker) was idle, and Phil's oldest boy, Ambrose, a lad of eighteen, had the misfortune to shoot himself through the hand while playing with a gun, and died of lockjaw, spite of medical skill and good nursing. This destroyed Priscilla's faith in doctors, but it enabled her to date back all her troubles and bodily ailments to the time of the accident. She even went so far as to say to me once, "Before my poor boy, Ambrose, was took I could run and jump and dance with the youngest." And she remained firm in that belief. Soon after Ambrose's death Priscilla was seized with inflammation of the stomach, but obstinately refused to send for a doctor, "as they had done Ambrose no good." My mother, who was on a visit to me, and who had the knowledge of medicine which all slave-owners acquired sooner or later, gave her medicine, and as Priscilla recovered, the negroes declared she was more skilful than the doctors. When she was recovering, mamma made her some arrowroot jelly as soon as she thought it prudent for her to eat, and taking it to her she found Priscilla eating fried bacon, into the gravy of which she was dipping cold corn bread! Upon mamma's remonstrating with her upon such imprudence, she quietly replied, "I have no appetite, so I told Norry to fry me a slice of bacon!"

Norry, or Noah, was Priscilla's youngest child, and though too much inclined to play truant from school, was very useful to his mother at home. Priscilla informed me once that her feelings had been hurt by some one asking her why she had named her child after old Noah, the blacksmith. "I told him," said she, "that I did not name my boy after the blacksmith, *but after the man who made the world.*" Priscilla was a burning and a shining light in the colored church, groaning dismally whenever this mark of sympathy was expected from the congregation, and it was Sister 'Cilla here and Sister 'Cilla there, but she possessed a very small amount of biblical knowledge. The negroes have adopted the Methodist custom of calling each other (the professors of religion) brother and sister. I am sorry to say that Priscilla was not quite as regular in her attendance at church as she might have been. One Saturday she informed me that she could not come up the next morning, as she must go to church. When she came in the afternoon, I asked her if she had heard a good

sermon. "Oh," said she, "I did not go to church, but I combed my head, and that was just as good." A good combing of their woolly heads is a lengthy operation, as it can only be performed by putting a little cotton on the hair and then carding it with a very fine carding-comb. They always profess to feel much refreshed bodily and mentally by the proceeding.

The negroes' selections of names for their children are often very amusing. The maid of a friend of mine had twin girls. They were her first-born, and no names seemed fine enough to the young mother, until a wag suggested Constantinople and Constitutional. These names were thankfully accepted, but, being found too grand for every-day use, were finally shortened to Con and Tit. On our own place, Rachel Baker had one son named "John Bascomb," partly, as the parents said, for the celebrated preacher, and partly for the celebrated race-horse of the same name; and the name being always given him in full, he finally dropped the Baker entirely and took Bascomb as his family name.

Naming a child for a race-horse was, at least, more disinterested than the choice made by Josephine Taylor, a lazy, pockmarked woman on our plantation. Priscilla said to me one day, "Miss Julia, have you heard what a lovely name Josephine has given her baby?" Upon my acknowledging my ignorance, I was informed that the baby was the happy possessor of my own name *in full*, followed by my mother's name in full, including both family names. The mother doubtless expected a handsome present from each of us, but she was disappointed, as, had she received it, the whole rising population would have been sporting our joint names. Being obliged, however, to show some interest in the matter, I suggested that Josephine should come up to "the house" and get a few pounds of sugar. "Oh, Miss Julia," said Priscilla, reproachfully, "that's just impossible! She is a decent woman, and her month is not up." The baby was twenty-five days old and the weather perfect, but the negroes consider it unladylike to leave their cabins under a full month.

Humphrey Taylor, Josephine's husband, was an unhappy-looking man, very tall, thin, and loose-jointed, and his spirits had never recovered from a punishment inflicted on him during the war. He had stolen a barrel of flour from some

Northern soldiers. They caught him in the act, and devised a new punishment for his benefit. They tied his arms down by his sides, and cutting in an empty flour-barrel a hole just big enough for his head to go through, they put it on him like a coat of mail and set him on his feet in the cellar, where they kept him twenty-four hours without food. This treatment broke Humphrey's spirits completely, and he was never known to smile, and did his work ever after in a joyless, lifeless manner.

Priscilla came one Saturday to take leave of me, as she was going to spend a day with a friend near Donaldsonville. As she had a puffy carpet-bag in her hand, I said, looking at it, "I am afraid you are prepared to spend more than a day." "Oh, no, Miss Julia," replied she; "I've only took a change of linen; I can't go without that." She took out *the change of linen* to attest the truth of her words, and it proved to be a new green calico dress, with a red and yellow head-handkerchief. She did not, however, keep her word to return on Monday. She had missed the boat, and, as she said, "When I found the boat was gone I was all to pieces."

Priscilla was really of very little use anywhere, but she considered her presence as indispensable to the well-being of the plantation, and consequently was very grateful to mamma for having, as she said, saved her life. One day, with her characteristic modesty, she went so far as to say, "It is a good thing old mistress saved my life in that spell, or you wouldn't have any one to bring you up sugar-cane!"

It was in bringing up sugar-cane for us to eat that Priscilla displayed her activity, after the sugar-making began. I went into one of the cane-fields to see the cane-cutters cut the cane. It was really a pretty sight. Armed with the cane-knives (hatchets they should rather be called), the row of cutters went on in a steady tramp, keeping time and step, and cutting the triple and quadruple stalks of cane with a single blow, making a clean cut which would do honor to a skilful surgeon.

On coming back, I met several little negroes with their arms full of stalks of sugar-cane. Young and old steal the cane to such an extent that it is a wonder any remains to be made into sugar. In slave-times it was given to them freely, and the negroes cannot understand that now, when the men

get in grinding-time forty and fifty dollars a month, besides board and lodging, they should not still have armfuls of cane and buckets of syrup and large dishes full of the hot, still soft, crystallized sugar.

I was much surprised on getting near the house to meet Elijah, who was shouting at the top of his voice, "Mrs. H—— has come! Mrs. H—— has come!" The only person I knew who had a right to that name was my mother, and she was at my side. My perplexity was at an end when I saw standing under one of our tall camellia-bushes my good old nurse Maria. She had been head-nurse at mamma's, and particularly devoted to me. She came to meet me, saying, "Miss Julia, I have come to spend the winter with you. I want to see sugar-making, and I want to eat plenty of oranges and sugar-cane." Her trunk was by her, duly marked "Mrs. H——, passenger on steamer ——;" and as, knowing the importance of first impressions, she had given Moses a quarter for bringing up her trunk, and Elijah some apples (a rarity with us) for carrying her bag, she was considered by our negroes to be fully entitled to the name of Mrs. H——. When visiting in the "quarters" she was always introduced by that name. I was very glad to see Maria, and gave her a good room over the kitchen, and will merely mention here that she enjoyed her three months' visit to me so much that the next winter she wrote to me to please to send her money to pay her fare down the river, as she wished to pay me a second visit. I did so, and found out that she spent the winter with me whenever she had a serious quarrel with her husband, whom she had married since the war. She usually kept him in order by recalling to him her past grandeur. Having belonged to the governor of the State, she felt so much above her spouse that, though she had condescended to marry him, she would neither take his name nor allow him to take hers, which he had offered to do.

Our French coachman, Baptiste, enjoyed Maria very much, and learned from her all the English he ever acquired. Baptiste had, for a European, a most unusual aversion to negroes, but as this particular one had had the honor of holding "Madame" in her arms, he was willing to treat her as an equal. The two would sit in the evening before the fire in the servants' hall, with their feet on the warm hearth, while Maria smoked her

short pipe (most negro women smoke after they reach a certain age) and expatiated on the glories of the past. Her loud laugh at Baptiste's broken English could often be heard in the drawing-room.

Maria was never tired of admiring my little girl, who she said was "real quality," as she very early showed her love for everything that was beautiful and refined. And her wonder knew no bounds when she met a negro belonging formerly to one of the old French Creole families and speaking only French, — a French patois, I should say, and I found it hard to understand them myself. As a slight specimen of their jargon I will merely state that they call smoke *la boccane*, and Smoky Bayou is Bayou *la Boccane*. An Irish tramp can often not even make these French negroes understand where he wants to go. But, if they speak bad French, they cook well, and are faithful and reliable, being known formerly for their devoted attachment to their masters.

Maria had but one child. Two of her children had been burnt up before I made my appearance on this world's stage. She had put them to bed and then gone to a camp-meeting, taking the key of the door of her cabin with her. Nothing was ever known, but it was supposed that the oldest one must have got out of bed to poke the fire; at any rate, the house was discovered to be on fire and the door locked. Before it could be burst open the children were dead. Jack, the only remaining child, whom she had taken with her to the camp-meeting (being a baby in the arms), was also the offspring of her first husband, who, as Maria always said, when trying to account for Jack's deficiencies, had been "a Guinea nigger." The father could certainly not have possessed much mental activity, for any one who knew Jack might be pardoned for believing with Darwin that man had developed out of a monkey.

Jack could cut wood, as he was not deficient in physical strength, but it was all he could do. My mother, who had quite a talent for training servants and for teaching them to think, had taken great pains with him, but all efforts to teach him anything whatsoever in his childhood had been unsuccessful. Housework being evidently above Jack's mental capacity, he was sent into the field. A good-natured overseer tried for a year to teach him to plough, but gave it up at last as a bad job, so that when Jack was raised to the dignity of

a freedman and a voter, he found it hard to earn money enough to put bread down the throat of that independent voter. His mother insisted upon what he did earn being paid to her, so that she might take care of it for him, but credit was to be had and Jack was of age. His fellow-freedmen, and especially his fellow-freedwomen, imposed upon him, and often asked him to get them things out of the store. Jack always consented, as no one had ever been able to make him understand that things bought on a credit must be paid for some time.

The quantity of fine ladies' Congress boots which were put down to Jack's account would have amazed any one who did not know that at the camp-meetings the most of the black ladies were shod at Jack's expense. The consequence was that when the bills were presented there was a decided refusal to pay, and generally a fight. So Jack spent half of his time in prison or working as a prisoner on the roads.

I paid daily visits to the sugar-house; all was now bustle and activity, though it was hard to get hands enough for the extra work. So many of the blacks throughout the land (one-third of the whole number it had been computed) had died during the first year of freedom, before wages had reached their present exorbitant rates, that most of the planters had to supplement with white laborers. These were generally Irish tramps, who knew nothing about work beyond ditching or grading for railroads. As one of them remarked once, when told to cut down some trees, "If they would only let us spade them up; we are divils of a hand at a spade." But there was no spading to be done in the sugar-house. The tramps generally came half starved, and by the time they had got fed up into good condition they were often too lazy for the night-watching, and had to be dismissed.

We had even more trouble than the other planters to get the requisite number of hands. Some of those who had been working for us all the year had been tempted off by the offer of higher wages for a few weeks. My husband then saw the merits of the system of *back* wages. Disliking the credit system, and being unused to freedmen, he had paid the hands their full wages at the end of each month, and so had no hold on them. The other planters paid only half of the month's wages at the end of each month, and kept back

the other half to be paid at the end of the year, hence the name of back wages. The contracts being made for the year, if a man left before the end of the year he forfeited these back wages. It was, moreover, a great advantage to the improvident freedmen to have their masters thus act as a savings bank for them, and hand them the sum of one hundred and forty dollars (and more, sometimes) in a lump at the end of the year. Our hands had been very glad to get their full wages at the end of each month, and had spent the whole. It was only towards the close of the year that they seemed to realize that no money was awaiting them, and then they felt injured.

Nic Baker, one of our best men, had always insisted upon having half of his wages kept back. One day he asked my husband if he would not advance him money to buy a fine cow. "Oh, yes," replied he; "and I will take it out of your back wages." "Oh, no, Master Eddie," said Nic; "please to stop it a little at a time, out of my *front* wages" (what he received each month). "I want to get a big pile at Christmas, and, maybe, get me a little place." These cows of the negroes were a great trouble to us, as they always put them into our pastures, and in the winter fed them on our corn. They usually bought cows which were sold for some fault, such as fence-jumping, hooking, etc. Poor Nic did not live to realize his little dream. He died after a very short illness, and was sincerely regretted by us. He had been a faithful servant.

His wife had always been as lazy as he was industrious. "The young widow," as Priscilla always called her, gave us a great deal of trouble. She would make no attempt to earn a reputable living for herself and child, not even taking in the washing and ironing and coarse sewing which were offered to her, and obstinately refusing to give up the cabin to the man who was hired in Nic's place and who needed it for his family.

It was about this time that three of our young friends came to spend a few days with us. According to Creole fashion strong coffee was always carried up early in the morning to our visitors to drink in bed. The first morning after their arrival Priscilla, who dearly loved to have a finger in everybody's pie, took advantage of a moment when Moses (our

dining-room servant) was looking for the sugar-tongs to snatch up the tray, and rushing up to the middle one of the three communicating guest chambers, called out loudly, "Gentlemen, here is your coffee; get up and drink it." Cousin Dick cried out, "Go away; we do not care about coffee." "But you *must* drink it," replied the inexorable Priscilla. "You can go back to bed again if you choose, but you must get up and drink it: *it's the rule of the house.*" This last statement Priscilla considered a knock-down argument, and she generally extemporized a rule for anything she wanted done. To the freedmen she was very fond of saying, "Look here, niggers, Miss Julia has done forgot more than you'll ever know," and this she considered as a high compliment paid to what I was still supposed to know as well as to my shrewdness.

At this time we received another visit which gave universal pleasure. During my visit to the North in the summer my good aunt had given my baby a pet donkey. For it we had bought a pretty little phaeton, leaving donkey and phaeton to be sent round by sea. In due time we received advice from New Orleans that they had arrived and would be sent up the river on the steamer "Swallow," and landed at such a time. The triple whistle being heard at the appointed time, Baptiste went down to receive *l'âne de mademoiselle*, and we followed. What was my surprise on reaching the park gate to see jump off the landing-plank, ahead of its mother, the shaggiest of baby donkeys! It seemed, Venus-like, to have sprung out of the foam of the sea. Its joy at finding a free space to move in was unbounded, and it galloped up and down the levee with perfect confidence, although it had no knowledge of anything but the close box on the ocean steamer, and a stall equally contracted on the "Swallow." The mother came on with slow and measured steps, but was evidently very proud of the addition to her bill of lading.

I paid daily visits to the sugar-house. Jim Black was stoker, and the bright firelight shone on his merry face, as he pushed one big log after another into the furnace to the tune of "Did you ever see a sheep shell corn by the rattle of his horn?" or else, "Who's been here since I've been gone? a great big nigger with a foot like a shovel," and other plantation songs. Children are busy carrying sugar-cane to the

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feeding-gang, and these put armful after armful of cane into the slide which takes the cane to the steam-engine, whose work it is to crush the cane to get out the juice, and who, like an insatiable giant, keeps crying ever, "more, more." When it has stripped the stalks of their juice it throws them out as *bagasse* into another slide. The little sulphur machine keeps whizzing away as if it felt quite as large as its big neighbor. The huge kettles are boiling and bubbling, and ever and anon the men are dipping with long-handled buckets the boiling juice from one kettle into another, as the cane-juice has to be boiled in four different kettles before it comes into the still larger one, where it is finally boiled down to the consistency requisite for crystallizing.

From this kettle it is taken, in very thick, tight, square, low wooden boxes or wagons, along the little railroad, which runs between the two rows of coolers, into which the syrup is poured and allowed to stand till crystallized. It was my delight to take out spoonfuls of the still warm sugar when it was about the consistency of butter and eat it as one does candy.

One evening during the grinding season I invited some friends to a small evening party. Having occasion to go into my bedroom during the evening, I was surprised to find it quite denuded of chairs. Wishing to investigate this matter I stepped out on to the veranda, and saw through the open kitchen door a gathering of woolly heads. On a double row of chairs round the kitchen sat as many freed men and women as there were chairs. Seeing Priscilla bustling round with an air of great importance, I called her up and asked the meaning of this gathering (with which, however, I had been familiar in my childhood in slave-times). "La! Miss Julia," was her reply, "we have to keep up the credit of the family, and show them hirelings at Major C——'s that there's flour and sugar in the pantry, and that you and Master Eddie ain't no carpet-baggers." "That's very well," said I, somewhat mollified, "but I think it would have been as well to have asked only one or two." "So we did," replied Priscilla, cheerfully: "we agreed each should ask two friends, but Moses said he could not ask the gentlemen without their ladies, and where we invited ladies the gentlemen came without being asked, and Aunt Rachel's two friends is mighty old,

and they've done brought all their grandchildren ! They're that fond of cake, Miss Julia, and there isn't much going nowadays. We'll want lots of cakes and preserves and good things, Miss Julia," added Priscilla, in a confidential whisper. There was no resisting such childlike trust in my liberality, and they did get "lots of cakes and preserves and good things."

All things must have an end, and so had poor Priscilla's blameless life. She was seized a second time by her old enemy, inflammation of the bowels, and grieved much for my mother, who had brought her so successfully through the first, and who had then left me. "If I could handle my feet as old mistress does hers," said Priscilla, "I'd start to-morrow and go and fetch her." One day her next neighbor, Grace Bailey, came for me, saying Priscilla was took mighty bad and wanted to see me.

I went immediately to Priscilla's cabin. As soon as she saw me she said, in a broken voice, "Miss Julia, I'm a going to glory. I'll see you in heaven. We'll all sit at one table there. We'll all be washed white in the blood of the Lamb. I don't reckon we'll right off get as white as the white folks, but there won't be no black ones in heaven. The Bible says we'll be like the angels in heaven, and no one ever did hear of a black angel. Little missy, she'll know me right off, and she'll say, 'Piano, come and hold my harp.'" (My little girl called her Pina, but Priscilla had always insisted upon it that she called her Piano, and considered it as a great compliment.) "Little missy's real quality, and don't know nothing about waiting on herself. My name is Priscilla, but little missy calls me Piano, but my *real* name is Cécile. The angel will say 'Cécile, here's a gold footstool for you, you've been a good and faithful servant; you've loved the white folks.' We black ones won't get no gold harps, we'll only get gold footstools, and we'll sit on them with palms in our hands, and we'll sing the song of the new Jerusalem, 'Glory to the Lamb;' and I 'xpect it will be an easy tune, and we black ones will hollow louder than the white folks with their gold harps." She fell back exhausted, and for a while we thought her trustful spirit had already winged its flight to the mansions of the blessed; but after a while she opened her eyes again, and said, "Meet me in glory," and all was over.

II.

THE DOUBLE WEDDING AT DUNDERVIKSBORG.

BY PROFESSOR KARL EDWARD ZEDRITZ.

TRANSLATED FROM THE SWEDISH

BY MRS. FRANCES C. HENDERSON.

By a little bay in a Swedish inland sea—which one is no concern of the reader's, as I do not intend to describe the locality—lay, and still lies, a fine estate, belonging to Major von Bomben. The building is of stone, two stories high, with two upper or garret rooms, side by side, on either side, forming, so to speak, a kind of third story or frontispiece. The windows of one pair looked out on a large court-yard, in which were several small buildings. The outlook from the other pair of rooms was on an orchard, which, with the adjoining park, had a view of the lake. From one side of the dwelling you could hear at a little distance the busy hum of the mill-wheel. From the other side you could see, not hear, the busy work at a brickyard. In the garret rooms on the orchard side lived the major, on the other side Herr von Rindstädter.

Herr von Rindstädter was the major's cousin. He had from his childhood been nearly inseparable from the major, and went to live with him as soon as he inherited the estate. Rindstädter had lived with the major already before his marriage. The major had taken very tender care of his cousin, whose mental gifts were very small. Indeed, bad tongues had said occasionally that Cousin John, as Rindstädter was usually called, was not quite right in his mind, which was not true. At any rate, Rindstädter lived with

the major, and was devoted to him as a child to his mother, and helped him in managing the estate, which he did not do so badly. Von Rindstädter was the mainspring of the management, and the major the balance-wheel. The major placed unlimited confidence in Von Rindstädter.

When the major was in the house he spent his time mostly in his own room. He was now sixty years old, and was beginning to grow weary of the world. His principal occupation was reading the newspapers; and he was a hot politician, but his politics were as gray as his head. His principles were, however, liberal for an old soldier who had served under the hero king, Charles the Fourteenth, and fought with him. Besides the papers he read travels and books on husbandry, and in the course of the day occasionally smoked his costly meerschaum pipe (he could not bear cigars), and cleaned and arranged his many guns, and looked over his voluminous correspondence. His intercourse with his family was restricted to an hour in the morning at the breakfast-table, half an hour after dinner, and an hour at tea-time. He seldom took any supper, but if he did it was because he had remained with the family the whole evening.

The most marked feature in the major's character was an unusually hot temper. His appearance, which the large gray moustache rendered stern at all times, became so frightful when he was in a passion that the whole house trembled. Still, when he was in a mild and affectionate mood, a look of almost angelic goodness rested in those same eyes; but this fiery temperament and extraordinary violence often gave rise to very bizarre rencontres.

Von Rindstädter was a very different person. This man, if he could strictly be called one, was the direct opposite of the major; and yet, as we have said, they were bound by the ties of the warmest friendship. He was incessantly occupied with farming accounts and the check-books of the laborers. He was so shy with ladies that he never remained with them after meals longer than was absolutely necessary. Spite of the dry nature of his daily occupations, to which he devoted himself more from love of the major than of the dry reckonings, he had a certain poetical vein in his nature, and was especially fond of lyric poetry. He had even written some fugitive poems himself. He amused himself also with a

turner's lathe, and (as one said) even occasionally with ladies' work, such as sewing and embroidery.

His imagination was strongly impressed by the dangers to which humanity is exposed, but the talent and sharp-sightedness which he showed in discovering these dangers savored somewhat of cowardice. His memory was stored with all manner of unlucky accidents, all of which tended to prove that no amount of foresight is sufficient to ward off the frightful dangers which threaten human life from all quarters. He could tell you of persons who had been killed by tiles falling from the roof, of others who had found death in a bottle or needles in their meat; of some who had broken their legs on a smooth floor, and occasionally even of some who, alarmed by frightful dreams, and trying in their sleep to ward off the impending danger, had beaten out their brains against the bedposts or the walls. It was rather difficult to induce him to relate these anecdotes, as a sort of instinct taught him that other people did not share his opinions; but when he had once begun, he was like one inspired by the genius of destruction and fear. But my reader must not suppose that he was as great a coward in real life as he was in theory. He was constitutionally timid, but at the same time really religious, and when weak-mindedness is joined to piety a man often becomes a fatalist. But Von Rindstädter was not a simple fatalist: with his dread of dangers which he saw threaten him from all sides was combined a firm trust in an overruling Providence. Therefore he was always steadfast and resigned, and at all times prepared for death, in whatever shape it might come. His natural cowardice made him very observant of the rule requiring a man to take due care of his life, but he was fully persuaded that this care would be insufficient.

"Have you time, dear John? if not I will not disturb you," said the major, one afternoon, looking, after his siesta, into Von Rindstädter's room.

"Oh, yes," replied he, half rising from his table, with the respect he always showed the major.

"Well, dear John," was the answer, "then I will talk with you a little, and pour out my troubles, as usual. Do you know, I am more and more worried by these d—d lovers and

courting visits. I am no longer at home in my own house, and am become, as it were, a stranger in my own family. Take your cap and let us go into the woods; one can talk better under the open heaven."

Von Rindstädter obeyed the major instantly, and the two gentlemen began their walk.

"My wife," began the major, when they were far enough to be sure of not being overheard,—“my wife,—hear, John! you know I love the silly creature, and do not mean to say anything which can hurt your feelings,—my wife grows every day sillier and more sentimental. At the same time, each day vanity acquires more power over her, and I begin to fear that she is no longer merely a passive spectator of intrigues, but that she now takes an active part in them."

"Hm!" replied John. "I do not know anything about such things."

"Therefore," said the major, "I do not expect you to understand me or to answer me. But you can let me talk, and sympathize with me in my troubles."

Von Rindstädter walked like one in a dream and stared straight before him, out of sheer gratitude for such a proof of confidence. The major noticed that Von Rindstädter was walking close by a building of which they were repairing the roof, so he called to him, "Do not go too near the stables."

Von Rindstädter made such a wide jump in his fright that he fell into a ditch.

"Now you will certainly break both your neck and your legs," said the major, and he jumped down into the ditch to help his friend to rise. "I am such a Satan's coward, but I promise you not to scream so loud another time in my fright. The fact is, I just then remembered how a young lady in Stockholm was killed by a tile falling from the roof of a stable. I think you told me the story yourself."

Von Rindstädter had not hurt himself at all, so they continued their walk.

"Thank God, there was no harm done," said the major. "But to resume our discourse. It may be true that I have gradually become somewhat estranged from my family, and that may be hard enough for an old man to bear, but let that pass. It is another thing which worries me now. I have

considered that it is not consistent with my duties as husband, father, and relation to allow of intrigues. You know that I not only always disapprove of my wife's plans, but that I have my own, which are always diametrically opposed to hers. Salmis shall never marry Clara; another shall. Guess who, John."

Von Rindstädter was aroused so suddenly from his passive state as listener that his eyes became larger, and curiosity gave a slight color to his pale cheeks, but he did not say a word.

"Bergström, my boy," said the major, with flashing eyes; "Bergström shall have her. What do you say to that?"

Von Rindstädter stood still and looked on the ground, but soon raised his tearful eyes, with a smile so inwardly good as could be called forth only by the cordial assent of a good heart to an unexpected proposal.

"Good, John!" said the major. "I see you approve of my discovery."

"Fully," said Von Rindstädter, at last. "Only Bergström himself——"

"My dear John," interrupted the major, "I must say you are as blind as a bat in affairs of the heart. You walk therein in such utter darkness that you cannot see your hand before your face. Is not that so?"

Rindstädter gave a nod, which plainly showed that in all things relative to the intercourse between man and woman he saw and understood just nothing.

"Have you never seen," continued the major, "with what eyes Bergström looks at Clara? I have seen clearly what o'clock has struck. I do not mean to say that Clara is also in love with him; but she likes him well enough, and occasionally throws a glance at him while she is talking with Salmis; but that may be only coquetry. At any rate, we shall see. The girl must have at least half of my heart, as she is my daughter; so she must necessarily, sooner or later, love him at least half as well as her father does, and, in my old eyes, that is sufficient. As for Bergström, he is in love, quite as much in love as I was in my poor Agnes. Bergström tries to control his feelings and to look careless, and when she speaks to him he answers her as shortly as possible, and with the crossiest look in the world; looking, in fact, very

much as if he had been ordered to storm a battery. But that is only to conceal his real feelings, for I have noticed that when she is coquetting with Salmis he looks either fierce or silly. I understand those things, my dear John; I have myself that silly habit of getting red in the face and wet in the eyes, as if one were peeling onions. But that Bergström does not say a word does him honor, and is the very reason that I—— To tell you the truth, John, when I first discovered that attachment I was angry, for aristocratic feeling is very strong with all of us who, in this world, have the luck to stand one pin-hole higher than some of our neighbors. But now I love him as if he were my own son, and I have sworn by my moustache and the memory of Carl Johann that he and no one else shall have Clara. As for what relates to Rebecca Böhm,—hush! my dear John, I know that you and I really do think alike in these matters,—she shall never be united to that disagreeable fool Dünkelstern.”

Von Rindstädter gave no answer, but, according to his custom, nodded his head with a good and submissive smile, which only meant that the major was harping upon a well-known and often-discussed theme, but one which was not personally unpleasant to him.

“As I said,” continued the major, “Dünkelstern shall never marry the unpretending Rebecca. Good heavens! if I were such an idiot as to let him have her, my old high-minded brother—a more honorable man, perhaps, even than I (if he was not noble)—would turn over in his coffin with vexation; and I would not, even for a kiss from Saint Peter at the gates of heaven, come face to face with him in a better world. Is not that right, John?”

Von Rindstädter, who was well acquainted with the views of both brothers, shook his head to express assent.

“Good,” continued the major. “You know the plan I have formed for Rebecca. Let us see if you are able now to talk about it without embarrassment, nay, even with pleasure. You know I mean to give Rebecca to you. Yes, yes, my boy, I shall *force* you to be happy. On this point you do not know what is for your own good. But be assured old Walter von Bomben does know. Still, as it is not yet actually settled, speak out without reserve, and without consid-

ering my wishes ; tell me, candidly, if you will have the girl or not."

Von Rindstädter, finding himself thus cornered, became by turns red and white, and a gesture with both hands seemed to push the major's proposal away from him. The major was both grieved and surprised, but made use of all his diplomatic arts to convince him, as he felt the more anxious to obtain his *free* and *ready* assent that his own mind was irrevocably made up. Von Rindstädter, having exhausted his ammunition, finally gave way. Being utterly unaccustomed to oppose the major in anything, he at last said yes with the bashfulness of a girl, and—wonderful character—after the deed of heroism he had performed in saying that little word "yes" he felt happier in his mind, and his heart was lighter than it had been for a long time ; in fact, since the astounding idea of marrying him to Rebecca had entered the major's head. As the seal of their covenant the major folded Von Rindstädter in his arms, and granted his hesitating and unusual request that Rebecca should hear nothing of the matter until the fatal day and hour arrived.

"Thanks be to heaven," said the major, "that this affair is at last positively settled ; but let me, dear John, hear your opinion of the girl."

"Of course, my good major," answered Von Rindstädter, "of course I will have Miss Rebecca." And now he felt so contented after he had given the major this solemn assurance, that he might almost be said to have a taste of the happiness swelling the bosom of a lover who has just secured the consent of his lady-love.

"Right, John, right," said the major ; "and now let us turn back, both of us contented and happy. But do not go too near the fence. That Satan's beast could run its horns through you between the pickets, and little Rebecca would be cheated out of her day of honor."

The major, now in the rosiest of humor, laughed heartily over his own joke, and drew strong puffs from his china pipe, till his moustache reminded one of the roof of a cow-stable struck by lightning, when the fire is bursting through the thatch.

On the evening of this same day I must introduce my

reader to the party gathered in the little sitting-room. Here is the mistress of the house, the baroness, as she was the daughter of Baron von Wickenström, her daughter Clara, Chamberlain Dünkelstern, Lieutenant Salmis, and the major's niece, Miss Rebecca Böhm. These gentlemen often rode over from the not very distant capital, particularly in summer, and generally remained two or three days. They had, after dinner, and after the afternoon coffee-drinking, conversed so uninterruptedly with the ladies that, to use the major's simile, they reminded one of *burrs* sticking to a woollen skirt. Just before tea a rarer guest had arrived, but his visit was more particularly to the major, who had made his acquaintance some years since at a hunt, although it was not very long since he had introduced him to his ladies. This was Sergeant Bergström.

In the middle of the sofa, behind the handsome lamp with its opaque shade, sat Baroness von Bomben. Although this lady was not so extraordinarily interesting as the reader might hope to find her, I must make my reader better acquainted with her, so that he may judge for himself of the truth of the major's opinion of his better-half. For this purpose I will say that she strongly reminded one of Charles Dickens's *Mrs. Nickleby*. The baroness was fat and fully as vain as Mrs. Nickleby. Without being a flirt she was, even in her older days, used to receiving attention from gentlemen, and really thought that she was the chief attraction in the house. It is true that she understood the wishes of Salmis and Dünkelstern and aided them, but she thought they particularly wished to secure her for a mother, and that it was only his poverty which induced Dünkelstern to court the homely Rebecca. These two gentlemen had certainly encouraged her in this belief, and by setting this trap for her vanity had secured abundant opportunities for pressing their suits with the young ladies.

The unusually handsome Clara soon showed herself to be an apt scholar of a mother fond of admiration. But her high forehead indicated a much better mind, and her large blue eyes reminded one of her father.

Lieutenant Salmis considered his name as French, but he had never been known to claim a French extraction until the revolution of 1848 had made the French nation an object of interest to both friends and foes.

On a low chair, close by the baroness, sat the major's brother's daughter, Miss Rebecca Böhm. Her appearance was quite ordinary and her age somewhat advanced, say over thirty. Her face indicated goodness, but a somewhat lymphatic goodness, which never got thoroughly warm. Her character was peaceful and unassuming, and she took part in everything, but without ever taking a lively interest in anything. Her whole manner showed that, though she was not a daughter of the house, she took too active a part in the housekeeping to have much time left to improve her mind. At her side, but between her and the baroness, sat the Chamberlain Dunkelstern. He looked about fifty. Here and there a stray gray hair showed that he was bald, which defect he hid with a wig of shining brown hair. He had the look of a *roué*, and it was easy to see that he was not the least bit in love with Rebecca, whose only attraction for him was the handsome property inherited from her father. Rebecca answered his affected grimaces with her kindly smile, but when she looked down at her sewing Dunkelstern seized the opportunity to steal a glance at Clara, and if she were not looking he gazed on her with longing eyes, not forgetting, however, to bestow upon the mother, from time to time, a look full of respect and *courtoisie*. With Salmis he exchanged glances, which seemed to say that he fully realized that Rebecca was a goose, and that he hoped his friend would give him too much credit for good taste to suppose for a moment that he could be honestly in love with her. On a chair near the door sat the newly-arrived guest, Sergeant Bergström. After saluting the company he had dropped quietly into the least desirable place in the room. Bergström was a tall, well-made man, about twenty-two years old. The expression of his face was manly and decided, although his manners were modest, not to say timid. He was certainly a handsome fellow; and, although retiring in manner, showed plainly that he was of a good family and had had a good education.

All except Rebecca had answered the young man's greeting in a formal, though polite manner. Even the baroness interrupted the conversation going on when he entered to perform her duties as hostess.

"We were just speaking of a hunt and its pleasures, Sergeant Bergström," said she. "But it seems to me you

were also once at a bear-hunt. I think my husband repeated to me part of a conversation he had with you at that time."

"Yes," replied Bergström, "that is true. Last winter I paid a visit with my parents to some relations we have in Wermland. A friend of mine arranged a bear-hunt at that time, and invited me to take part in it."

"Hu! that must be real fun," said Clara, with a little irony in her tone and a glance at Salmis and Dünkelstern.

"That is for you, chamberlain," said Salmis, who wished to fasten at once upon Dünkelstern any allusions which might be made to them.

"Ah!" said Dünkelstern, who was vexed, though he had not rightly understood Clara's irony. Clara was only thinking of cowardice, and so had Salmis understood her, but Dünkelstern had interpreted her words differently. "I think," said he, "that in respect to this kind of hunt a chamberlain and a lieutenant in the guards are much on a par. If the lieutenant is fortunate enough to escape from the bear with a whole skin, he will hardly find any pleasure in attacking him in his cave."

Thereupon both gentlemen laughed and looked at the ladies for approval. These had a pleasant and mediatory look, reminding one of seconds in a duel, who are there to watch that the quarrel be fought fairly out.

"I suppose it is possible to enjoy one's self even if one is afraid," said the literal and prosaic Rebecca.

As no one made any comment on this remark, Bergström said, "If I may be allowed to give my opinion, I should say both yes and no. In this respect the sexes differ. History shows us that men have in all ages been fond of sports attended by danger. I do not know if this is a virtue, but it is so. I, for instance, was on a bear-hunt, and I know from my own experience that, though not free from danger, it is a very exciting pleasure. I cannot deny that I felt a sort of fear while engaged in combat with the powerful enemy; nevertheless, it was a pleasure of the highest order. After we had, with loud cries, driven the bear to the edge of the lake, and enclosed him in a pretty large half-circle, he made several powerful jumps, and concealed himself in a group of trees with thick foliage and closely interwoven branches, standing in the middle of our semicircle. Four or five of the best marksmen

were ordered out by my uncle, who was the leader of the hunt, to stand, each at a given place, near the copse of trees. Although I could not boast of the same skill as the others, my uncle insisted upon my making one of their number. We stood for some time peeping in between the leaves without catching a glimpse of the bear. Suddenly we heard a scream from a crowd of women who, armed with iron-shod staves, had taken their places on a little hill; these had caught the first glimpse of Nalle, who afterwards began to move. This scream set him in motion. Immediately my nearest neighbor, who was, however, at some little distance from me, fired and wounded the bear, but not mortally. He immediately made for me, but ceasing to jump, came walking on his hind legs. I waited for him in my place, which was a good one. With frightful growls the wild beast stared at me with his bloodshot eyes. I knew that this was a struggle for death or life. For one moment a shudder went through my bones and marrow, but only for one moment; then as the bear came nearer to me I felt my muscles harden and my sight grow clearer, and without fear I let him come quite near me, and gave him a shot under the shoulder which finished him. It was more luck than skill, as at that time I was not nearly so good a shot as I have become since. 'Well done!' called out my uncle, who had slipped up behind me, and who was quite as cool as if he had been playing a game of backgammon with the parson. As he put his snuff-box in his pocket just then, I saw that he had taken a pinch in the excitement of the moment. He had his gun under his arm, and knew that his unerring aim would finish the bear if my shot missed."

The young man had stood up during the last half of his narration, which he accompanied with lively gestures. The two gentlemen listened to him with a feeling akin to envy. The baroness and Rebecca several times said, *hu!* and found his account tiresome and uninteresting. Clara's face wore a singular expression, the clear blue eyes seemed larger and more brilliant, and a drawing together of her eyebrows gave her forehead a daring look.

"Well, Mr. Bergström," said Clara,—she thought Mr. Bergström sounded better than Sergeant Bergström,—“I think I understand how one can really enjoy pleasures accompanied by danger.”

Just at this moment the major and Von Rindstädter came in to tea. The major was in high spirits, which was seldom the case in this company. The resolution he had formed concerning love intrigues had entirely changed his standing towards his antagonists. The old soldier felt as if he had won a strong position. He kissed his wife on the mouth and Clara on the forehead, clapped Rebecca on the shoulder, and shook hands cheerfully with Salmis and Dünkelstern. To Bergström he simply nodded, but he nodded three times in the most friendly manner.

The major's stay after tea was, as usual, very short. He exchanged a few words with the "tea society," as he called it, and went back with Rindstädter to his room. At the door he stopped to tell Bergström to come up to his room to smoke a pipe in the old fashion. That, he said, he knew would not suit city gentlemen, with their cigar-cases and their porte-monnaies for cigarettes. He disliked all new-fangled notions, as he said.

"My dear friends," said the baroness, as soon as the three gentlemen—the major, Von Rindstädter, and the sergeant—had departed, "let us resume our conversation at the point where the sergeant's arrival obliged us to break off. Dear Rebecca, see if the door into the boudoir is closed, so that none of the servants may overhear us."

"My gracious cousin!" said Dünkelstern, kissing the baroness's hand. "You allow me to give you that name when there is only the family present? You are my good angel and Rebecca's. But dare we indulge in the bright hopes which you held out to us this afternoon? Is it really possible to win the major over to our side? I doubt it a little, notwithstanding my confidence in your influence over him."

"You may trust me, my good Dünkelstern," replied the baroness. "My husband, the major, does not trouble himself about such things. He has his farm, his guns, his pipes, and his newspaper, and he takes no interest in anything else. You are secure of your aim now that you have succeeded in convincing me of your solid and honorable way of thinking, and both of you of your mutual attachment. The major has noticed nothing, and it is better that he should suspect nothing. Should he accidentally have seen something, which is possible, he will offer no objection, if we may judge from his

friendly, cheerful face. Even you, my good Salmis, dare hope to win Clara. You have, as far as your wishes go, only one opponent to fear, and that is Albert, my own dear boy. He, truly, has the bad taste not to like you, but he has no power to oppose my will."

"My gracious aunt," sighed Salmis, "I am everlastingly indebted to you. But thou art so thoughtful, my own sweet angel," said he, turning to Clara.

"I am certainly not thoughtful," said the conceited and lively beauty. "I am only thinking seriously about that interesting story about the hunt." Feeling that Salmis's hand which held hers trembled slightly, and having the habit of girls fond of admiration, who never allow their admirers, and not even their bridegrooms, to feel sure of their affection, she added, "That Bergström is a gallant, manly fellow, and I have just discovered to my own surprise that he is handsome."

Upon this interesting piece of information Salmis got up and took a glass of water, upon which Dünkelstern smiled in a somewhat malicious manner.

"Yes, Bergström is really the handsomest man I have seen; though, to be sure, I have not seen many men," joined in the passionless and thoughtless Rebecca.

"Do you really think so, my love?" said Dünkelstern, taking a gold tooth-pick out of his vest-pocket. Salmis had now recovered his composure, and took his place once more by Clara's side.

"How kind and loving father's brother was this evening!" said Rebecca, after a short pause.

"When he is otherwise," said Clara, more tartly than became a good daughter, "it is because he has been a good deal with that child in leading strings, Von Rindstädter. That man becomes every day more insufferable. He reminds me of salt fish without salt or pepper."

All laughed at this idea except Rebecca. Salmis stroked his moustache and kissed the tips of his lady-love's fingers. From the baroness's manner it was easy to see that she did not deem the comparison elegant.

"Clara is a little unjust towards Rindstädter," said Rebecca. "He is a very good man, always obliging, always afraid of giving trouble, very sensible in everything which

belongs to household arrangements, and he has a real talent for making pens. I like all good people. In his small room everything is as neat as in a baby-house."

A general laugh interrupted Rebecca, who raised her astonished eyes and could not imagine what she had said to be laughed at. The baroness looked at Rebecca, and frowned as if at some secret and painful reminiscence.

At the mention of baby-house Dünkelstern's brow grew dark, and he cast inquiring looks around to see if any one besides himself had thought of a French word in frequent use.

Just at this time a frightful noise was heard on the staircase. One heard persons rush rather than go down the steps. The major's voice was heard coming nearer and nearer, then a heavy fall and a breaking of glass in the hall. Fear seized them all, not even excepting Salmis. He opened the door into the hall, and there saw the major, who had the strength of a giant, holding a man by the collar with one hand while he belabored him with a stick he was holding in his other hand. He was just on the point of casting him, like a ball, from the top of the stone steps, screaming, "You have drunk too much, you rascal! I'll teach you to do so another time!"

The baroness and Clara threw their arms round the two; but, though they withheld the major from further action, they did not succeed in quieting him. But presently some one came softly down the steps, and Rindstädter appeared in shirt-sleeves and slippers, and laid his hand with a beseeching look upon the major's arm. The touch seemed electric, and to impart to the major all the gentleness of the conjuror's nature. He loosened his hold of the man, who promised amendment. The major stood quite still, and said, "Forgive me, John, my boy; it was stupid in me, but I could not keep my temper with that wine-sponge. Go to bed, you rascal, and sleep off your drink. Be sure to be to-morrow punctually at seven o'clock at Mr. von Rindstädter's door, fall on your knees before that gentleman, and ask him if you can get forgiveness this once still, or if he will allow me to pitch you out of the window. Right about, march!" Then, turning to his wife, he said, "Forgive me, my dear; I am not surprised that you were fright-

ened. Pray, all of you, excuse me." Then he took Von Rindstädter's arm and went back to his room.

The company returned to the little sitting-room. The baroness was still faint from fright, and Rebecca held a bottle of smelling-salts under her nose, so that she was herself again soon and got a little color in her cheeks.

"It is impossible," said the baroness, "to renew the broken thread of our discourse. My husband's fits of passion are fearful. Thank heaven I have never been the cause of one of them! but I know that if I ever should be, I should die of fright. My dear sirs, were you not frightened?"

Clara looked mockingly at her own and Rebecca's lover.

"I was a little afraid for you ladies, I must confess," said Salmis. "That was a fearful burst of passion. If we heard just now about bears, we have now seen the king of beasts, for the major was really lion-like."

"And still my father is so good," said Clara. "What a heart he has!" And the thought of her father's heart filled her own. The coquette disappeared and left only the loving daughter, radiant with womanly beauty. It was a pity Bergström could not have seen her then.

"When uncle is angry," said Rebecca, "Cousin Rindstädter is the only person who can do anything with him."

"That is the child and the lion," said Clara, mockingly.

"Does aunt remember," continued Rebecca, "how father's brother threw Peter Mattson in the mill-pond?"

"Oh, don't I!" sobbed the baroness, taking out her pocket-handkerchief. The gentlemen looked curious.

"Why, it happened so," said Rebecca, who knew that her aunt's nerves were not as delicate as she wished them to appear. "We were all sitting quietly on the bench near the steps,—aunt, Clara, and I. Father's brother went over to the brickyard to smoke his pipe. All of a sudden we heard a shriek from within the lower story of the building. We could see father's brother throw away his pipe and rush in. The screams stopped instantly, and father's brother came out carrying the bricklayer, Peter Mattson, who had beaten an apprentice with a spade.

"Father's brother, who was so angry that he did not seem to know what he was doing, set Peter Mattson on his feet on the greensward and knocked him down. Then he told him

to pick himself up, and knocked him down again and again. At last he picked him up in his arms, carried him to the mill-pond, and threw him in head over heels. This funny burst of passion was at the same time so terrific that we all began to scream, though we were unable to stir from the spot. I do not know if father's brother's better nature got the upper hand then, or if he saw Cousin Rindstädter, who was running to us as fast as he could; but, all of a sudden, with the rapidity of lightning, he threw into the pond a little boat, which he saw pulled up on the grass, jumped in and drew in Peter Mattson, who could not swim, but who, fortunately, had found footing on the bottom of the pond. Having done this as hastily as he had thrown him in, father's brother took his pipe again, and, leaving the brickyard, went towards the park. We did not see him again that day, and never dared make any allusion to it. Father's brother was evidently annoyed at our having seen the whole affair from the steps. Poor Peter Mattson, who had drank a quantity of water——"

"My dearest Rebecca," said her aunt, "cannot we pass over that episode?"

The gentlemen politely repressed their desire to laugh, and Rebecca, who became instantly silent, blushed slightly. This time she understood the drift of her aunt's remark, and she cast down her eyes, a little annoyed.

"But, my good Rebecca," said Clara, "you should also mention the nice sum of money my excellent papa gave Peter Mattson to make amends for his short journey through the air."

"Through the air, indeed!" said Rebecca. "Peter Mattson was as wet as a frog and green as *Neck*. Cousin Rindstädter told me that father's brother deeply regretted having used such violence towards Peter Mattson, although he richly deserved punishment. He immediately set to work to see how he could help Peter without giving him any direct indemnification, as Peter is himself very obstinate and high-tempered. Father's brother finally determined to educate Peter Mattson's oldest boy, who has a good head, and he has kept him ever since that affair at school in ——. Peter Mattson was so touched by the major's kindness that he has never struck one of his journeymen or apprentices since. Every little boy reminds him of his son."

"You see, dear mamma," said Clara, laughing, "that it will be impossible for us to return to the subject which engrossed our attention when papa's burst of anger interrupted us. I will therefore add one anecdote to Rebecca's sketch of papa. There is on this estate a boy who is really clever, and his quickness and original ideas have quite endeared him to papa. This does not, however, prevent papa from getting angry with him occasionally and knocking him down or boxing his ears. But the love for his favorite returns very soon, and then my father is quite disposed to make him some small present as a 'compensation.' The foreman and laborers (as Rindstädter has told Rebecca) all consider the favorite a rascal, and declare that whenever he is out of money or tobacco he does something to induce papa to knock him down, and then he is sure of having his wants supplied the next day as 'compensation.'"

But we will leave the company, as the anecdotes are probably more interesting to them than to us, and go up to the major's room, where Rindstädter and Bergström are smoking pipes with the old soldier and discussing a much more important subject.

The major is stretched out at full length upon the sofa with his favorite pipe in his mouth. Rindstädter and Bergström are sitting directly opposite to him. "Smoke another pipe, Bergström," said the major. "It does not matter if an unmarried man gets home an hour sooner or later."

Bergström rose, bowed to the major, and filled his pipe again. He was quite touched to see how well he stood with him. He felt sure of that, because the major urged him to smoke, whereas he did not generally like to see young people smoke, and also because he had several times called him "my boy." That distinction had heretofore been reserved for Rindstädter.

"Well, my dear Bergström, how is papa? The devil take me, but, spite of my affection for your family, I had forgotten to ask after your father and mother. Is the old man's chest stronger, or must his assistant still do duty for him every Sunday?"

"My father," replied Bergström, "is, thank heaven, better now, and performs his duty alone. In fact, for the last two months he has had no assistant. He cannot afford it, as it is only a third-class parish."

"True enough," said the major, with a sympathizing tone, "and he has several sons. May God bless every housefather who tries to support his family in the sweat of his brow, whether it be with the plough or the pen! Is the tobacco good?"

"Excellent," replied Bergström, half rising to express his thanks.

"I hope so," said the major; "that is my favorite mixture: Havana and one-third real Dutch canister. Bergström, my boy, I want to tell you something, but may I be d—d if I can."

Rindstädter winked at Bergström, who paid the utmost attention. This winking was intended to soothe and encourage him.

"Bergström," said the major, "you need not mind Von Rindstädter's being here. I had intended to open the subject gradually, but I find it harder than I had expected. Hm! my dear Bergström, I will just ask you one question. I would like to know—perhaps an answer would be contrary to the *esprit du corps*—but still, you serve in another regiment,—tell me what do you think of Lieutenant Salmis? Is he the right man for his hat?"

Bergström hesitated a moment, but then answered quickly, "Respect for you and the love of truth oblige me to say that I do not like Lieutenant Salmis, or rather that I do not understand him. He and I have been brought up in such different circles."

"I am quite of your opinion," said the major, "although you have hinted at it rather than expressed it. Do you think—hm!—that Clara would be happy with him?"

Bergström turned red and pale by turns, but remained silent. Finally he said, "I must beg the major not to insist upon an answer."

"I see that you are an honest man," said the major. "I understand your answer, which was not meant for an answer. You have noticed that Clara is a coquette?"

Bergström remained silent.

"That is right," said the major. "I understand this answer also. But Clara is too good a girl naturally to remain a coquette long. Can I speak with you freely and openly without fearing that you will betray my confidence? Now, do not get angry. I spoke sharply, stupidly perhaps. But, do you see,

I am about to speak on a delicate subject, but it is necessary that I should make you my confidant. Young man, can you be as silent as the grave?"

Bergström assured the major he need have no fear.

"Good!" said the major; "only for form's sake I was obliged to put the question. When one asks *it* it was only that one was sure of one's man beforehand. Now listen to me, Bergström. I shall not ask you a question, but I shall tell you something. You love Clara."

"Major!" said Bergström, who became very red and then deadly pale.

"Yes, major; yes," said Von Bomben, laughing; "so it is; but tell me honestly, how can you love a coquette?"

"Major," said Bergström, "I will not say I love Miss Clara, but only that I have an unfortunate attachment."

"Well said," replied the major, warmly. "You are a very good boy, Bergström."

Bergström looked at the major with astonishment.

"But, my boy," continued the major, "how could you be so thoughtless as to fall in love when you are only a sergeant and have not a penny?"

"Major," said Bergström (with a pained expression on his handsome, manly face), "with the same candor with which I have spoken so far, I must say that I do not deserve your reproof. No man can prevent his falling in love, but he only is foolish who does not struggle against a hopeless attachment. For my part I have, from the beginning, struggled and do still struggle against this love, which is foolish, because it is hopeless."

"Very good! very good!" said the major.

Again Bergström looked at the major with astonishment. It seemed to him that in his conduct there was a contradiction which he could not explain. He could not understand why this conversation should have taken place. So he remained silent for some time, but at last he said, "In this struggle I have been careful of the honor of your house and of mine own. It is inconceivable to me that you should have guessed my secret, but I am confident that no one else in the house, least of all Miss Clara, has done so."

"I can answer for that," said the major, "and have been pleased with your discretion. It is especially honorable in

you not to have let Clara suspect anything. You are a handsome fellow, and are not wanting in the qualities of head and heart likely to take a young girl's fancy. Such a one, if he be only a sergeant and as poor as a church mouse, need only cast sweet looks and say sweet things. But I am sorry that you do not admire Clara."

Bergström looked much astonished, but said nothing.

"Now, do you see," continued the major, "Clara might be much better than she is. Her vain and silly mother, the baroness, is to blame for her coquetry. But please not to repeat what I say, gentlemen; it is only I who have a right to speak thus of the baroness, who is my honored wife. Do you understand me, gentlemen?"

Both Bergström and Rindstädt made a respectful bow of assent.

"My honored wife had her head a little turned, in her time, by a fashionable governess and modern examples and teaching and courting in Stockholm, and heaven knows what else. All the nonsense lurking in her nature has been drawn out intentionally by those fools Salmis and Dünkelstern before I noticed it. But the case with Clara is,—without disparagement to my honored wife,—that she has a better head and a warmer heart."

The major's eyes filled with tears, thinking of the daughter whom he loved so tenderly. He seemed oppressed by his emotion, and left the sofa and busied himself with his pipes and his guns.

He came back perfectly composed, but from his rapid walk up and down the room it was evident that he had now come to the critical moment, and that he was aiming another blow to settle the matter. Finally he said, "Well, Bergström, you said that you do not fancy Clara, but that you love her?"

"Yes," whispered tremblingly the brave conqueror of the bear.

"Well," continued the major, in a joking tone, but with a voice which showed how deeply he was moved, "it then remains with you to say if you will take orders from an old pensioned major of another regiment or not. Take Clara for your wife and develop all the good in her character."

The old soldier, no longer able to control his emotion, took Bergström in his arms and behaved like a silly child.

Von Rindstädter, who took the liveliest interest in all that the major did, pulled his handkerchief out of his pocket. It was with the deepest sympathy that he contemplated this approaching marriage, though to his own he was indifferent, not to say opposed.

Bergström had wiped away the tears which gratitude and happiness had wrung from him, but had not yet been able to say a word. He sat on his chair, staring straight before him.

But the major, who had said what he wanted to say, was lively and courageous again. "Now, my boy, do you take the order to march or not?"

"My high-minded and beloved major," answered Bergström, "I owe you eternal and unceasing gratitude for this conversation, this confidence, this unbounded benevolence. But—forgive my candor—I think in this affair, only in this, I can see clearer than you, and all the rapture you hold out to me is only a dream. I believe in your full power in all family matters, but not over Miss Clara's heart. She does not love me,—nay, she despises me, or rather she scarcely notices that I am in existence."

"Stop there," said the major; "that last is false. Who the devil could despise you? It is true she does not love you, but then she does not love any one. It is exactly because she does not know what love is that she listens to her mother's wishes and is amused by Salmis's love-making. Do not try to make me believe that she is in love with that fool. She is simply looking forward to the time when, as his wife, but with her own fortune,—for Salmis is as poor as you, nay, poorer, for he has doubtless debts,—she will be able to live in the capital and open her salons as a charming hostess. But I hope that real happiness is in store for her. So, my boy, I think the affair is settled."

The major did not think any answer necessary, and Bergström only said, "Ah, major!" and shook his head with a melancholy smile.

"Yes, it will be major yet awhile," said the old man, "and then it will be father, but now as silent as the grave, till I say 'speak.' Not a single word to your old father, nor a single lovesick look at Clara. Be as silent as John here. It would be as impossible to worm a secret out of him as out of the

Mercury who is standing on tiptoe on the top of our flag-staff. And now," said the major, "not one word more about this business. Now, Bergström, have confidence, my boy! You can say as one of my old companions in arms said one day; you must hear that anecdote. Look at Rindstädter here, you can see how bashful he is, just like a girl. My old comrade married somewhat late; but no, I won't tell you. Good-night."

That evening the major said to his wife, "My dear Agnes, I have a word to say to you. I know, no matter how, that you and your 'tea society' are cooking a couple of marriages which are not at all to my taste."

The baroness grew pale, but said nothing; it is even quite possible that she trembled a little.

"Yes, so it is, old lady," said the major. "Those two, Salmis and Dünkelstern, whose acquaintance we made in Stockholm, and 'cultivated' (to use your expression) afterwards at the Springs, are a couple of fools, and I am not sure that Dünkelstern is not a rascal as well. At any rate, I now tell you they shall never win their game, although they have secured your confidence and your help."

"My dear Von Bomben——"

"No, my dear; and so that you may know what to do, I tell you my countermine is for Rebecca to take Rindstädter."

"But, my dearest Von Bomben——"

"And also that Clara shall take Bergström."

"Good heavens!"

"Hush, my honored wife," said the major, on whose cheeks an angry spot already appeared. "Not one word more on the subject. And now, good-night."

The baroness was silent. She did not dare make the lion shake his mane, but she lay awake all night thinking over what she had heard.

One day, some time afterwards, the major entered Von Rindstädter's room.

"Do you know what?" said he,—"a letter from my son Albert, who is, as you know, in a German agricultural school, informs me of the death of the widow of my brother, Anders Böhm. You know circumstances induced him to establish himself as merchant in Lübeck, and it seems now that

Rebecca's inheritance will be even larger than I expected. Grease your boots, Rindstädter. The thousand! you young people, you and your old woman, should buy from me the Olbrygge farm, which belongs to Dunderviksborg, and lies about three-fourths of a mile from here. Yes, yes, I think you will be quite wealthy, and will find us good neighbors. Laugh, John; clap your hands."

The modest Von Rindstädter did not clap his hands or laugh, he looked rather worried, though as good and yielding as usual.

The major said, "Bergström and Clara, the dear children, shall have Gädtnäs. Hey, John! do you know that these plans, which are to assure the peace and joy of my remaining days, make my old heart leap for very gladness?"

Now Rindstädter looked so wide awake that even Clara must have liked him if she could have seen him just then; but in reply to the major's remark he simply said, "How can you spare me at Dunderviksborg?"

"Nonsense, my boy! we can do without you," said the major. "You have arranged everything so nicely that it goes like clock-work. Moreover, Albert will have finished his course at the Agricultural Institute next year, and then I shall take him home. I will help him for a few years, until he feels thoroughly at home with the machinery you have set going, and then I shall rest. So do not be uneasy, John; I hope I have still some strength left."

And thereupon the major looked with some satisfaction at his muscular and well-formed leg and arm.

"But," said the major, "all this can be settled later, as the general adjutant used to say. Now I am going over to Lübeck to receive and put in order Rebecca's inheritance. I leave you at home, so that I can go with a quiet mind."

It was already autumn, and the cool October was drawing near, when the major took leave of his family to go to Stockholm and take a steamboat there for Lübeck.

With his departure the baroness's worry and fright over what her husband had said about her marriage plans ceased. She would never have dreamt of setting herself against his openly-expressed will, but she thought early and late whether it were worth while to repeat to her "tea society" what her husband had said. Finally she concluded to tell it simply to

the girls. Clara remained quite silent and thoughtful after she heard it. She was deeply pained that her father, whom she loved so tenderly, should have placed so little confidence in her as not to speak with her personally on the subject. Rebecca said, "My stars! did father's brother say that? He wants me to marry Uncle Rindstädter! That would never have entered my head! So!" To the baroness's question, if she should tell the news to the gentlemen, Rebecca replied that her aunt must decide for herself, as she was not able to give any opinion on the subject. Clara said most decidedly she should tell the gentlemen nothing. The whole affair was so new that her mind was paralyzed. She wished to speak with her father before they should hear anything.

When the major left Dunderviksborg he did not expect to be absent more than five weeks. But six weeks had passed, November had come, but no news from the major. The family was already uneasy, but a letter from Albert, the son, residing in Germany, changed their uneasiness to grief and dismay. He wrote that his father had heard, after he had settled his affairs in Lübeck, that steamers made the voyage between England and America in a reasonably quick time, and he had suddenly determined to take advantage of this opportunity. He had for several years cherished the (as he had thought) vain wish to ascertain how a government could be carried on, as was the case in the United States of North America, without a king standing at the helm. Hasty and impulsive as he was by nature, he had been seized with such a desire to travel that he had quite suddenly gone over from Lübeck to England, in order to embark for America, hoping to return to his family in the spring. He had asked Albert to inform his wife of his movements, as well as of his safe arrival in England, as he had no time to write himself. He had given the name of the steamer on which he sailed for America, and this steamer, as the shipping-list reported, had been lost.

One can imagine what dismay, what embarrassment, what grief seized the whole family. The baroness gave way at first to an unreasonable and immoderate grief, but was soon comforted. Rebecca shed many tears, and grieved for her uncle as sincerely as was possible for one of her impassive nature. Rindstädter grieved quietly, but deeply, as an older

child grieves for its mother. Clara's grief was the most heart-rending; she could find no tears, she could find no comfort.

Salmis was not a bad man. He had accustomed himself to consider the family as his own, and when the sad news came felt it as a personal loss. He was, however, thoughtless, and as Dünkelstern kept repeating to him that all obstacles to their speedy marriage were now removed, he very soon recovered his spirits. Dünkelstern played the rôle of a distressed relation, but his only feeling was one of unmixed satisfaction, as a sort of instinct told him that the major would hardly have put him in possession of Rebecca's fortune.

All those employed on the farm grieved sincerely for the major, which showed how sincerely this strict and passionate man was beloved for his goodness and uprightness.

The major was honored and esteemed in the whole neighborhood, so that the sympathy felt for the family was universal. But we must return to the hymeneal intrigues.

The two lovers paid their visits in the old routine. For the first few weeks they had sufficient tact and wisdom—Salmis even sufficient feeling—not to mention a subject which harmonized so ill with the family's mourning. It is true there were no outward signs of mourning,—no crape, etc.,—as the death had not been officially announced, but no one doubted it. The gentlemen noticed that the baroness's grief was not deep-seated, and that she very soon recovered her spirits so far as to resume her manœuvres. The baroness had become quiet enough to relate all sorts of stories, both grave and laughable, of the "blessed major." She had already reached the point where grief has a sort of sweetness as one feels interesting.

The baroness began to reflect that the major's unlucky fate enabled her to carry out her plans for the marriage of the two girls. She rejoiced to think she had not mentioned the major's objections to Salmis and Dünkelstern. When the two gentlemen cautiously took up the thread of the interrupted conversation, they found the baroness quite prepared for them and quite ready to resume her intrigues. The "tea society" became active once more.

Clara was always sad and thoughtful. All thought of marriage had become odious to her, and it was only the idea that

Salmis really loved her, and that she had, with her mother's assistance, tried to catch him, and that her father might even be said to have helped by his careless indifference, that enabled her to listen with any composure to allusions to that subject. But she would not for a long time think of anything like setting the day. It was only when her mother assured her that it would be a consolation to her, in her widowhood, to see her united to the man of her choice, that she agreed to let the wedding take place in the summer, if Albert, who would then be at home, thought fit to set a day.

Dünkelstern was the moving spring of the "tea society." Marriage was a necessity for him, as it was his only hope of escape from ruin. Dünkelstern was already *père de famille*, though without any legal right to the name. Rebecca was in his eyes only a "goose," but of her feathers he hoped to make a pillow on which to rest his head for continued debauchery. So it was Dünkelstern who was always urging Salmis to greater exertions.

Rebecca retained her even temper amid the ebb and flow of the various consultations. She was accustomed to Dünkelstern, and perhaps liked him rather better than the generality of her acquaintance. But she liked Cousin Rindstädter just as well, and thought of him with pleasure. She often watched him from the window when he was busy in the orchard, and wondered with which of the two she could be happier,—with Dünkelstern, whom she was now to marry, or with Cousin Rindstädter, whom she should have married if her "good father's brother" had lived.

Bergström's sorrow for the major's disappearance was deep and lasting. His visits, which had never been frequent, and timed with hunting- or fishing-parties, might now indeed be said to be few and far between.

Clara was completely changed. She had lost the mocking manner which had characterized her formerly. She had but little to say, and spoke with a sorrow-tinged politeness to all alike.

The snow melted unusually early, and already in March there were signs of returning spring. One fine day at the end of that month Bergström came over for a visit, and hearing that the two lovers were also there, and that the whole family, with the exception of Clara, who was in the

orchard, had gone out for a drive, he betook himself likewise to the orchard.

Fröken Clara sat on a bench, looking at the tokens of approaching spring. The meadows were already free from snow, and the air was unusually mild for the early season; still she was wrapped in a cloak.

"Forgive me, Fröken" (the appellation of the noble-born young ladies), said Bergström, approaching her. "As I had a little leisure to-day, I thought I would do myself the honor of paying the ladies a visit; but as I hear that all are out except you, Fröken, I have taken the liberty of presenting myself before you to beg you, as the claims of duty will prevent me from repeating my visit for several weeks, to present my respects to the baroness and Miss Rebecca."

Clara had colored a little when she saw the young man enter the gate, and when he had finished his address she went to him and shook hands with him.

"You are sincerely welcome, Mr. Bergström," said she. "I can bid you welcome, not only in my own name, but in that of the others, who will return very soon. Please to sit down."

Then there was a pause, during which both seemed to be thinking how they should carry on the conversation.

At last Clara said in a dreamy manner, "How has Mr. Bergström been since we last saw him? But I see I have asked a question which I can answer myself. We heard yesterday from one of your father's parishioners that your whole family, including the old gentleman, were quite well."

"Yes, thank God!" answered Bergström. "And I could wish that all were going on as well here. I see something in Fröken's eyes which pains me, and yet it would pain me still more if it were not there."

"What does the sergeant mean?" said Clara, blushing, but with a steady voice.

"Yes," said Bergström, with a warm look, and drawing nearer. "I know that Fröken Clara and I have a like sorrow though in different degree. We are both thinking of the major."

"True," said Clara, reassured. Tears ran down her cheeks, and she gave the young man her hand. "I cannot do otherwise than like you for your attachment to my unfortunate father."

Bergström's hand trembled and he moved a little farther off. Clara looked at him with wondering eyes. The conversation flagged for a while, then she said, "As you are so devoted to my father, to his memory I should say, I ask you if you have heard any news."

"Yes," said Bergström. "Fröken's engagement is spoken of everywhere."

"Yes," said Clara; "it was my mother's wish, and has been a consolation to her, she says. For my part, I should have preferred that the thing should not be spoken of till the time for the wedding were settled."

"What has happened has happened," said Bergström, "and I really cannot see that it makes any difference whether it be known a little earlier or a little later."

"I hope," said Clara, with an inquiring look at Bergström, "that does not prevent you from offering me your wishes for my future happiness?"

"Oh!" said Bergström, "from the bottom of my heart I wish you all manner of good, and only hope that every one's good wishes may be as sincere as mine."

The trembling voice with which Bergström uttered these words induced Clara to look at him again with some curiosity, and to say, "Your answer is not straightforward; now tell me frankly, do you think I have a good chance of happiness?"

"Fröken Clara!" said Bergström, whose agitation prevented him from continuing.

Much astonished, Clara said slowly, and with a sigh, "I see you are not as candid with me as with my blessed father."

"So," said Bergström, with vivacity. "But that is a question I cannot answer. Put that same question to your father's spirit, and he will answer it by speaking to your heart."

Clara hesitated, though she could not see that any secret meaning was hidden under his words, and then said, "Mr. Bergström, whatever you may have meant by your remark, as you are good and just I will tell you my own views of the matter. I do not only believe, but I know that my father did not desire this marriage."

"And still——" said Bergström, in a scarcely audible voice.

"And still," said Clara, "I am about to give my hand to Salmis. Hear me, Mr. Bergström, before you condemn me. I believe—forgive what you may consider boldness in a young girl—that the words with which parents utter their wishes in similar cases must be understood, like obscure passages in the Bible, as modified by reason and circumstance. If my father objected to Salmis, which he really did, it could only have been because he did not consider him likely to insure my happiness. But if I, on my side, think that he is, I must surely know both Salmis and my own heart better than he did. And if my father was mistaken, while respecting the affection which dictated the judgment, I need not respect that judgment." Having said that, she looked steadfastly at Bergström.

"Fröken Clara," said Bergström, with deep emotion, "however strong my belief is that the major was right, my wish that he may prove to have been wrong is still stronger."

The almost sublime resignation which glistened in the young man's eyes deeply affected Clara, although she only took it to be disinterested sympathy, and she could not find words with which to thank him. She remained silent.

It was very evident that Clara was not in love with Salmis, but could that be any comfort to Bergström?

"You are doubtless interested in Rebecca's fate also," said Clara at last, interrogatively, "and you have doubtless formed your opinion of the happiness or unhappiness which her marriage may bring to her."

"Hm!" replied Bergström,— "the good and unpretending Miss Rebecca is not formed by nature for either great happiness or unhappiness. Miss Rebecca is one of those natures who have not life enough to be either very happy or very unhappy, but it is otherwise with natures more highly strung. Such a one cannot be happy in married life without real devotion to her husband."

Clara sighed. "Let us stop investigating so deep and dangerous a subject and pass to another one. Do you know that the other night I had a dream of my father, which seemed so real that when I awoke it took me an hour to reason myself back into the sad reality?"

"Did Fröken really have a dream?" said Bergström, and tears stood in his eyes. "Ah! if I only dared; but no, it would

be wrong; there was surely nothing in it." And he stared dreamily before him.

"What! In heaven's name, what did you say?" said Clara, with a trembling voice.

"Nothing, Fröken; really nothing. Rumors should never be repeated."

"My good, good Bergström! You increase my uneasiness instead of quieting it. If you wish me well, as you seem to do, say openly what was just now on your tongue."

"Then, if you must hear it,—but with the understanding that it shall remain a secret between us until something is known positively. I will not agitate others."

"I promise," said Clara, trembling like a leaf.

"I read two or three times in the newspaper," said Bergström, "extracts from foreign papers, stating that there was still some hope that the steamer on which the major sailed for America was not lost."

As he said this Fröken Clara rose from her seat, and stood before him as pale as a ghost. Noticing her agitation, Bergström rose also. Clara's agitation and faintness increased; she put her hand on his shoulder and rested her head against his breast.

A flame of fire shot through Bergström's veins. If he only dared kiss her once, just once! But the noble youth restrained himself, and simply put his hand behind her neck and pressed her head still closer to his breast.

Clara recovered herself after a while, and said, with glowing cheeks and an inspired look, "Think, think, if my father still lives!"

"For heaven's sake, Fröken, do not indulge that hope!" said Bergström. "Think of the sorrow you would have to bear a second time if the news should not be true."

"No, Mr. Bergström," replied Clara, "I do not fear that. I do not know the hearts of others, but I know my own. I have wept out. My father is for me now nothing but a holy and blessed memory. He is now lost to me; I cannot lose him again. I am not cheated if he does not come back, because now my heart expects nothing. But if he lives, if he comes back! Oh, Mr. Bergström! that were a gift direct from heaven which I should enjoy in blessed peace. My heart has now been tried and hardened by sorrow. As for

the others, I agree with you that no one else in this house should hear of this doubtless groundless report. But I hear the noise of wagon-wheels; the company is returning. We must change our subject."

Bergström looked troubled and restless. "I feel too much upset," said he, "not to be a tiresome companion. Allow me, therefore, to take my leave. They have not seen me. Farewell; but promise to think of me without bitterness, if this spark of hope should be extinguished."

"Yes, Bergström; I promise that," said Clara. "I shall ever have a kindly feeling for you. But I make you another promise: should my father return,—but no, he cannot be living, or we should have heard from him,—should he return, I promise to feel eternally grateful to you for having been the first to bring a ray of hope into my heart."

Bergström was deeply moved, but his embarrassed manner showed there was still something on his mind.

"You have still something to tell me, Mr. Bergström," said Clara, with an encouraging expression on her fair face. "Speak out, with your habitual frankness."

"I have a favor to ask of you, Fröken Clara, but can scarcely find courage to do so," said Bergström.

"Ask," said Clara. "I know you now, Mr. Bergström, to be a man of honor and refinement, and I feel sure you will ask nothing wrong. I promise beforehand to grant your request."

"I beg you," said Bergström, "to allow me once to kiss your hand. I know I am not entitled to such an honor, but your goodness has emboldened me."

"How you talk, Mr. Bergström!" said Clara, blushing deeply, and holding her hand out for him to kiss.

Bergström pressed his lips upon it, and let a tear fall on the soft, white hand. When he looked up in her face afterwards Clara saw, for the first time in her life, something in his eyes which awoke in her own heart a feeling hitherto unknown.

After this discovery Clara's ideas flowed in another channel. Until then she had not known the meaning of the word love. She had only known the enjoyment of coquetting, of attracting young men, and of attaching a favored one, finally,

to her triumphal car. After the major's disappearance deep grief had humbled her heart and changed her mood to melancholy. As to Salmis she had made up her mind, and from that hour, like all strong minds, she had found rest in resignation. Now she had seen that Bergström loved her. The love which, in an unguarded moment, had streamed forth from his eyes had fallen upon her heart like a spark of electricity. The thought of his love followed her everywhere, and as she thought of many trifling actions which women notice so quickly and remember so long, she felt sure he had loved her long. When she remembered her father's secret wishes, his last wish, one might say, she felt a burning uneasiness, and the idea of marrying Salmis became really painful to her. But she said nothing. Without acknowledging it to herself she hoped it might not be necessary.

Bergström's visits to the family ceased entirely.

Fourteen days later the family got hold of a newspaper, which created a great sensation. There was an article in it about a rumor that the steamer (on which they knew that Major von Bomben had sailed for America) had not been lost. But, unfortunately, there seemed to be no foundation for this glad rumor. This was about what Bergström had confided to Clara.

As we have said, this news made a great stir, but it was contradicted immediately. The baroness, who found it very difficult to go from one state of mind to another, was rather sorry to see a ray of hope, and when it was extinguished she said, "Yes, yes, misfortune is always certain, and it is not worth while to make one's self any illusion." And, with a sigh, she began to peel a juicy orange.

Fourteen days more passed away. One morning the letter-carrier entered Von Rindstädter's room. That day the latter did not appear at dinner, but reported himself indisposed. He came down to tea and said he was better, but seemed thoughtful. His eyes were red, as if he had been weeping. Nevertheless, he was more talkative than usual, that is, he really said a few words and was even heard to *laugh*, to the unutterable astonishment of all present. He surprised Clara particularly by looking at her with a peculiar smile, which any one who did not know Rindstädter might easily have

taken for a lover's look. This strange behavior lasted two days, only he took his meals as usual. Sometimes his eyes would fill suddenly with tears, so that he was forced to take out his pocket-handkerchief.

The next day Clara went on some errand into the so-called "state rooms." As she was leaving them and locking the doors, she heard Von Rindstädter come hurriedly down from his room. After clearing his throat a few times he said, "Cousin Clara, I do not think you have ever been in my room. Would you not like to see how I live? No one will see you go up with me."

Clara was much surprised by this very peculiar invitation, and with difficulty repressed a smile; but she accepted it, thinking there must be some exceptional cause for it.

"Sit down, my good cousin," said Rindstädter, when they reached his room, "I have something to tell you." And the tender-hearted man burst into tears.

"It must be a very sorrowful subject on which we are going to speak," said Clara, almost frightened, as Rindstädter's face betrayed deep emotion.

"On the contrary," sobbed Rindstädter, "it is only too joyful. I have been requested to convey a certain intelligence to the family, and to communicate it first to you as the strongest. I was told to do it cautiously, but I find that I am an unskilful agent."

"In heaven's name," said Clara, whose knees trembled, "say but one word,—is my father living?"

"Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes," comforted Rindstädter. "Do not be sad, do not be frightened, dearest Cousin Clara!"

Clara did not answer. She dropped on her knees and laid her head on the seat of a chair. She wept long and quietly, though her whole frame was quivering with emotion.

Rindstädter ran about helplessly, and anxiously wishing to quiet Clara's paroxysm of weeping. First he took up the water-pitcher and set it down again, then he took the enormous key of the barn and set it down likewise, then he opened the door into the hall, and then shut and bolted it, and, finally, went and patted Clara on the head.

But Clara now arose with the smiling repose of an angel. "I will only ask one question, my good uncle," said she: "how do you know what you have now told me?"

"I have had a letter from your brother Albert," was Rindstädter's reply.

"May I read the letter? may I have it?" said Clara.

Rindstädter gave her the letter with a glad smile, and Clara put it in her bosom.

"I remember I have another question to ask you," said Clara, seizing both of Rindstädter's hands. "I have often spoken disrespectfully to you, I have even made fun of you; because you are naturally timid, or rather you are less courageous than my father, who is my touchstone,—say, best of uncles, can you forgive me?"

Clara embraced Rindstädter with her round, white arms. Rindstädter, annoyed in the highest degree, shrugged his shoulders, put his hands behind him, finally stood on tiptoe, moved uneasily, and behaved very much like a two- or three-year-old boy who had something to confide to his nurse.

"Yes, yes, cousin!" stammered he at last. "I forgive everything. Hm! there is really nothing to forgive, only a little raillery on your part. I am really fond of you, though I do not know how to get along with ladies. You are very much like your good father. God be praised that he still lives and" (when he felt himself free from his cousin's embrace) "that all is over!"

With a warm and thankful pressure of the hand, Clara departed with the letter. She begged Rindstädter to behave as usual at table and to allow her to impart the news, when she deemed best, to the family.

"Good heavens!" said Clara, who had locked herself up in her room, "my father will be here in a few days, if all goes well."

She kissed the letter and pressed it to her heart. We will now impart to our readers as briefly as possible such portions of Albert's letter as can interest them.

The major had landed, happily, in America, although a dangerous accident, detaining them many days, had given rise to the report that the vessel was lost. He had returned to England in safety, and intended to return to his fatherland within a week after despatching the letter containing this intelligence.

Clara was now as quiet as she was happy, although she

found it hard to restrain tears of joy. She reflected upon the best mode of communicating to her mother and cousin the intelligence so deeply interesting to them all. Spite of all the caution she could use, the baroness's emotion was so great that the smelling-salts were needed to prevent a fainting fit. At last she recovered herself, but stared round the room with a bewildered air. Rebecca was very glad, and skipped about the room saying, "Ah! you dear, good father's brother, are you really coming back? shall I really see you once more?" This was the strongest emotion that Rebecca had known in the whole course of her life, even including the marriage intrigues.

As we have just said, the baroness soon recovered her composure, or rather, her old, wordy sentimentality. "Good heavens," said she, pressing her fine batiste handkerchief first to her eyes and then to her whole face, "how troubled and uneasy this world is! First I had to accustom myself to the horrible idea that my good Von Bomben was lying on the bottom of the-sea, and now I must accustom myself to the idea that he is living. But God's ways are not our ways," added she, with a sigh of resignation, "and, as a matter of course, it is with great pleasure that I hear that your father is to be restored to us. But, my dear girls, I fear that our marriage plans are a failure. Advise me, I do not know what to do or say. What shall I say to Salmis and Dünkels tern?"

"My dear mamma," said Clara, "let everything remain as it is till papa returns."

"That is also my idea," said Rebecca, in her usual pleasant, friendly manner.

"My dear girls," said the baroness, earnestly, "that will never do in the world. When I think of Von Bomben I shake like a leaf. Just feel my hand. Am I not pale?"

A few days later Salmis and Dünkels tern came over together from Stockholm, so that the "tea society" was together once more.

"We have heard a most agreeable piece of news in Stockholm," said Dünkels tern, with a stiff smile, which showed that he did not wish to believe the report he had heard. "I do not know if we dare congratulate the ladies on so extraordinary a piece of luck as that Major von Bomben should be alive."

"Oh, dear! yes," said the baroness, who exchanged glances with the girls, as if to congratulate each other that the gentle-

men had been the first to mention the subject. "The girls—yes, dear Clara, honesty is the best policy, as the proverb says—the girls and I had been reflecting how we could lead the conversation to this joyful piece of news, which, if I dare express myself openly, places us in the most embarrassing situation."

"Explain yourself, my gracious cousin," said Dünkelstern, with a smile which was rendered repulsive by the paleness which suddenly overspread his face.

"Yes, gentlemen," said the baroness, "the whole affair is at an end. Our plotting has been in vain. Von Bomben lives and will soon return."

"What happiness!" said Salmis, with a tone and look which proved his sincerity, for his heart was not bad.

Dünkelstern at first said nothing; but with the same smile and still paler, if possible, than before, he pressed the baroness's hand, as a silent and touching congratulation. "Well, my respected cousin," said he, at last, "I can imagine your happiness."

"It is great," said the baroness, "thanks be to heaven! But, gentlemen, our wedding preparations, what shall become of them? It lies heavily on my conscience,—yes, my good Clara, I cannot keep silent any longer,—it weighs on my conscience that we did not tell you what my husband said. He expressed his wish, his commandment, his threat, I may well say, the week before his adventurous journey. The reason that we did not say anything about it was that we thought it would never be necessary to mention it, as we heard so soon after his departure the uncomfortable news,—hu! I shudder still when I think about it,—the false tidings that the ship was lost."

"My most gracious aunt," asked Salmis, with great anxiety, "surely the major did not say anything against my union with my darling Clara?"

"My esteemed Salmis," answered the baroness, "heaven is my witness that this subject is a most unpleasant one for me. Indeed, I am at a loss how to express myself; but you, gentlemen, will understand what I now say. My husband—as I understood from a few words which slipped from him accidentally—has had no eyes for what is fine and attractive in your character, my good Salmis, and with his bizarre ap-

preciation of character, on which he is always harping, Cousin Dünkelstern does not seem to have found a soft spot."

Salmis looked cast down, but Dünkelstern's eyes expressed both anger and hate. The instinct which had rendered it impossible for him to approach the major now told him what the major thought of him: he could even guess what the major had said. But he remained silent.

"I can scarcely imagine," said Salmis, "that the major will refuse me Clara's hand, as I am sincerely attached to her and she to me. Is not that so, my own Clara, my loved one?"

Clara grew pale, though no one happened to notice it, and her only answer was downcast eyes and a faint pressure of her lover's hand.

"For my part," said Dünkelstern, with his false smile (the man lied whenever he spoke), "I find myself in the same happy predicament. I certainly possess your heart, my excellent Rebecca?"

"Of course you do, good Dünkelstern," said Rebecca, good-naturedly. "I think a great deal of you, but I would not dream of marrying you in opposition to father's brother's wishes. That would never enter my head. For," said she, after a few minutes' reflection, with a look and tone which were both good and naïve, "I have for father's brother such affection and respect, and even fear, that I feel sure I could bring myself to love and even to marry any one whom he would select."

An expression of contempt and dislike passed rapidly over Dünkelstern's face, but soon changed to his habitual false smile.

But as long as they talked that afternoon, and as often as the baroness said, "But, tell me, how shall we behave?" they found it impossible to come to any conclusion that evening.

We will now join another society, which is composed of only two persons. It is Major von Bomben and his son Albert, who are conversing in a room in the hotel in Calmar, during the time that the steamer stopped there on its way from Lübeck to Stockholm.

"But why did you not tell me that before?" said the major.

"Because," said Albert, a tall, well-made and broad-shouldered youth, in whom it was easy to recognize the major of forty years back,—"because it was not necessary before."

"And John," retorted the major, "wrote to you that the wedding was soon to take place if the news of my death had been confirmed?"

"Yes, father," said Albert; "but do not get angry, but remember, as a man of honor and one who keeps his word, the promise you made me which induced me to tell you my secret."

"You are right, you rascal," said the major, while he took his son with both hands by the collar and gazed in his eyes with such a look as only a father's love can prompt. "You are right, you rascal; but I was a fool to give that promise, as I see now you would have been obliged to tell me your story without it. But truly I might have expected anything from Fröken Agnes Marianna von Wickenström."

"Father!" interrupted Albert, with a hurt but manly look, "remember you are speaking of my mother."

"Right, Albert; excuse me," replied the major. "You are a real fine fellow,—as thin-skinned as the devil. I like you, Albert. But how could your sister Clara,—a little harum-scarum she is, but—yes, yes. I know the ring of the true metal,—how could she take part in such an intrigue?"

"Clara," replied Albert, "did not know her own heart. She knows nothing of the world."

"Heavens!" said the major: "but that irritates me still more against those who induced her to sacrifice herself." Now the major's light eyes grew red, and his eyebrows drew together till they looked like shades, and he knocked on the table with his clenched fist till the decanters danced, while he screamed, "May judgment overtake me, a sinner, if I do not——"

"Now you are forgetting our agreement again," said Albert, quietly.

"True, true," said the major, quieting down; "true, but have I not good reasons for getting hopping mad?"

"Less than you think, my dear father," said Albert. "Hear me patiently for one moment. What have they done which has not happened thousands of times in families? They have simply engaged in a love-affair without consulting the head of the house. Of course they did not dream of carrying out their plans against papa's wishes, but they foolishly hoped to be able to win papa over to their side. Salmis is a fool, but

does not know that he is one. He considers himself as an important person with a good future, and as he is really in love with Clara, it is quite natural for him to consider his share in the intrigue as perfectly honorable. He really thinks he will secure Clara's happiness at the same time as his own. You ought not to be angry with Clara either. She was flattered by Salmis's attention, and as she has a kind heart,—and heart attracts heart,—it is probable that she has learned to like him to a certain point. You expect from Clara what you have no right to expect, and are yourself to blame if she is not all you could wish. You have played with her as if she were a doll, and conversed with her as if she were a full-grown woman. As to Rebecca, it is not worth while to talk about her. The only person with whom you ought to be angry is Dünkelstorn, and he is beneath your notice. He is a heartless and selfish man, who only wants Rebecca's money."

The major listened to his son with the closest attention, and in order to keep his temper and to show Albert that his patience was inexhaustible, he leaned back on the sofa with both legs and arms crossed. One might have expected that some parts of his speech would irritate the passionate father, and his eyes did occasionally roll rather wildly, but, upon the whole, Albert's speech made a very good impression on him. His son's bold honesty touched a responsive chord in the father's heart.

"The devil take me," burst from the major, at last, "if I can understand where you got your sensible and really convincing way of reasoning. You certainly did not inherit it from me, and—but it is all one where you got it. But," continued he, evidently quite delighted, "you are a sappermented bold youth to speak to your father in that way; but—let it pass. Tell me, you powerful reasoner, what do you want me to do?"

"Nothing, father; just nothing at all," said Albert.

"Nothing!" repeated the major, with great astonishment and a high color. "Nothing, sir! What sort of a Danvik story is that?"

"Nothing," said Albert; "because it is not *necessary* for you to do anything. Remember that respect and affection are not the only feelings we entertain for you, but also fear."

"Fear, indeed!" cried the major, evidently flattered,

although he pretended to regard Albert's assertion as a joke. "Fear; you look like it, you young rascal!"

"Our fear of you is so great," continued Albert, without seeming to notice the major's remark, "that no one would dream of opposing what was supposed to be your wish, still less your expressed will. Do you think that those at home, when they are informed of your safety and speedy return, would continue to think of their old plans? Oh, I know you, my father; you do not think any such thing."

"Well, Albert," said the major, who rose up and shook his son's hand, "this time I will follow your advice, for I really do not know anything better to do. But now we must hurry down to the boat or we shall be left."

We shall go ahead of them to Dunderviksborg.

The gentlemen from Stockholm had been persuaded to spend a week there, as the spring was lovely and early.

It was dinner-time. That day there was an unheard-of commotion in Dunderviksborg. The evening before, the major's messenger had arrived with some of his things and the announcement that he would be at home the next day. The baroness had not closed her eyes the whole night, and was now somewhat under the influence of Hoffmann's drops. Clara had shed tears of joy till midnight, and then slept like an angel,—if angels do sleep. Rebecca had clapped her small white hands twice as she was getting into bed, and dropped asleep in the quiet certainty of embracing her good father's brother on the next day.

Dünkelstern had spent a good hour, on the previous evening, in Salmis's room. The gentlemen sat each in a corner of the sofa, and conversed while smoking cigars. Their friendship, which had never been of the right sort, had long been at an end.

"Do you think," said Salmis, "that all is really over?"

"Decidedly," said Dünkelstern; "there can be no doubt of that."

"It is really frightful," said Salmis, "to lose such a pearl as Clara." And thereupon he wiped his eyes with his East India silk handkerchief. "Under raillery and intrigues I have learned to love the girl devotedly. She has a good mind and a good heart, though she is a little malicious sometimes ;

and then, what a lovely face, what a neck, what hands! Oh, it is fearful!"

"Fearful?" asked Dünkelstern, jokingly. "One must really be acquainted with your mode of expressing yourself to understand you, my dear Salmis. You say that Clara has a good heart, though she is a little malicious, and I say that you have quite a poetical vein, although you are stupid. You are a fool, Salmis; or rather, an ass," said Dünkelstern, with the affected tone of a genuine but reproving friend. "Was it to fall in love that we agreed to come to this house to do our courting? Was it not to get our affairs in order so as to be able to enjoy the future? Have you not been able from the very first to rest quietly in the certainty that if you only secured the money you would get the face and neck and hands likewise?"

"Don't talk so," said Salmis; "I do not like it. You cannot enter into my feelings."

"Oh, you joker!" said Dünkelstern. "Just as if you had not had a dozen love-affairs in Stockholm."

"That is false!" said Salmis, jumping up, and speaking in an excited tone which was quite unusual with him. "I shall never find such a girl as Clara again; and now hush; not one word more!" And he threw down his cigar with a threatening gesture.

Dünkelstern was not a brave man, so he thought it best to hold his tongue for a while.

After a lapse of time he resumed: "In your eyes I am evidently less to be pitied, as I only lose a goose, but it was such a goose as one only gets on St. Martin's eve. You remember the habits of our Bachelors' Club."

"Not a word of that, either," replied Salmis. "You are a rascal, Dünkelstern. You only wanted to get her money and then neglect her. I, at least, intended to devote myself to her who set me free from the usurers."

Dünkelstern did not dare answer, but made a face at Salmis after the latter had turned his back on him.

When Salmis turned round again Dünkelstern said, with his usual tone and manner, "You are in a bad humor this evening. I shall leave you to sleep it off."

"Go to the devil!" said Salmis, and began to undress.

"Good!" said Dünkelstern, quietly; "only you might be a

little more polite. I really do not know how I have offended you."

"So!" said Salmis.

"What shall we do to-morrow?" said the older gentleman.

"I intend to keep my promise," said Salmis, "and take part in the deliberations to-morrow morning. The major returns in the afternoon: and now be so kind as to go to the devil, as I have already begged you to do. I wish to be alone." Thereupon Salmis jumped into bed.

When D nkelstern saw him in bed he felt vexed, and would have been glad to revenge himself before he went by saying something which would leave its sting; but he could not think of anything.

"Get along with you, I say!" called out Salmis, whose sore heart made him really quarrelsome. "I have to thank you and your so-called friendship for this disappointment."

"To tell the truth, you ought to be grateful to me," said D nkelstern, whose looks showed that for once he spoke from conviction. "Was it not I who showed you how to raise money, and afterwards—though you now consider your happiness as depending entirely upon her—showed you where to find an attractive girl? You had seen Clara before, but still I had to call your attention to her. I, who was better acquainted with the family, had really the right of choice; but I took Rebecca and left you Clara. Am I to blame for it if you have not sufficient merit to make the girl fall in love with you (for she is certainly not in love with you), and to win her father and mother over to your side?"

"Oh, you vagabond!" said Salmis, who found himself insulted in his misfortune. "You look like a man who can make a girl fall in love with you and win her parents over to your side! You look as if you could have taken Clara from me, if you had wished, you fifty-year-old fool! Begone, as I said."

"Yes, you thirty-year-old ass," said D nkelstern, near the door. Salmis sat up in bed and seized the bootjack. D nkelstern rushed out and shut the door hastily.

On the morning of the day when the major was expected everything was in motion at Dunderviksborg. Clara was invisible: she had shut herself up in her room. John von

Rindstädter was, on the contrary, everywhere ; he flew hither and thither, giving now this order, now that : sometimes two contrary orders at once. He seemed to be out of his mind, and to be entirely wanting in his usual order and punctuality. No one made so many useless trips on that day, or went so oft out of his way as he, unless it were the guardian of the orchard, the big, black Mufti.

The baroness assembled her "tea society" immediately after breakfast. Clara, as we have already said, was absent.

The baroness had that day exerted herself,—something which she had perhaps never done in her life before,—and had brought all her eloquence to bear on the subject. Her habitual, dreamy, languid manner had vanished.

We need not give the result of this conference, but merely say that their decision was only formed just as they had to separate to dress for dinner, and we will paint the society as they appeared before separating.

The baroness was sitting on the sofa, rather fatigued by her exertions, but her eyes looked brighter than usual ; her cheeks were rosy, and her whole appearance handsomer than was her wont. She sat in a careless attitude, and her still handsome arms hung down by her side.

Salmis sat next to her on a chair, with one leg crossed over the other. He held his folded handkerchief over his mouth and chin ; his face was very red, and his eyes looked as if he had been crying.

Rebecca seemed petrified by astonishment over something which had happened, but was as placid as usual, and her expression did not denote dissatisfaction.

Dünkelstern was standing by the window, looking into the orchard and drumming on the window-panes. How he looked we cannot say, but we can imagine it.

The baroness arose and shook hands with them all, one after the other.

"So then we are agreed, my dear friends," said she, so as to close with these words the tea consultation ; the "tea society" having been forced to hold this its last session from breakfast till mid-day. "I have tried to show you that it is not possible for me to act otherwise, as the report has been so widely spread. As I, contrary to my nature and habits, mean to take so bold a step, I think I have a right to count upon your

co-operation. Thank heaven that Clara, who is not to know anything of our determination until the fatal hour has come, is absent, leaving us free to consult. Farewell now till dinner. I press your hand once more, my dear Dünkelstern; and yours also, my dear Salmis. May the bond which mutual confidence and mutual attachment have formed between us be everlasting! Support me well at the critical moment."

The major was only expected late in the evening, at the most to supper. At seven o'clock the "tea society" had met, and we will join them for the last time.

The baroness opened the conversation by remarking how tiresome it was that Dünkelstern had been forced, by some business, to leave immediately after dinner, so as to be in Stockholm by the appointed time.

As no one paid any attention to this observation of the baroness, the modest Rebecca felt obliged, out of politeness to her good aunt, to prophesy that it would be a little dull, at first, without Cousin Dünkelstern.

The conversation languished; as the baroness did not feel equal to any fresh exertion.

Some of my readers may remember that, some years since, the Day of Judgment was supposed to be at hand. Many, especially women, were filled with fear; an uncertain uneasiness pervaded the atmosphere, and some persons seemed a prey to despair. The writer of this remembers to have seen at every street corner in the small town where he lived, and even in the church-yards, groups of persons waiting for coming events.

The baroness would now have reminded them of this anxious, expecting frame of mind. One could see that something weighty was to happen, and that she knew that the time was now at hand. She seemed uneasy and restless. She was very pale. She was sewing, but her trembling hand could scarcely hold the needle.

Rebecca was like herself, only she looked a little roguish. Although she had been for several days expecting father's brother's arrival, she looked upon his arrival now in the light of an *attrape*.

Clara was sewing, with glowing cheeks and dreamy looks.

Salmis sat, as before dinner, with his handkerchief over his mouth and chin, and never took his eyes off of Clara.

The baroness felt obliged to say something at last, so, "I have often told you, my dear friends," said she, "that I find very little pleasure in strong emotions. Heaven is my witness how thankful I am to an overruling Providence that my good, honorable Von Bomben is alive and is coming back, but this waiting for him is painful to me. This tension of the soul is insufferable. If we were sure of the *exact* time of his arrival we could take an exhilarating walk and go to meet him."

Just then they heard the door of the hall open hastily and persons enter the hall. A loud whispering, and a quick, firm step upon the stone floor of the hall, attracted their attention. They rose to their feet; the drawing-room door opened and the major entered. He stood for a moment in the doorway like a sentinel and opened his arms.

Clara threw herself with the spring of a gazelle into those arms, and was pressed to her father's heart; and it seemed really as if her father had wished this greeting to be the first.

Clara's emotion was so great that her whole body shook, and her head sank for a moment powerless on her father's shoulder. "Calm yourself, my darling," said the major, with a broken voice; "be my sensible daughter again. You know now that your old father is living."

Then the major hastened towards his wife, but she was seized with spasmodic twitchings. Tears ran down her cheeks, and she waved her husband off with the hand which held the embroidered handkerchief.

"The devil, Marianna!" said the major, soothingly. "Do not be frightened! I should have done better to follow the advice given me to prepare you a little for my appearance, but I am, as you see, as I always was, rather stupid in such cases. So, so, my old woman; give me a good hug. I do not surely look like the shadow of a drowned man. So, good! with this embrace it is as if I said, 'God bless you all;' you too, my good Rebecca; and you too, my good Salmis." The major then kissed Rebecca and shook hands with Salmis in a friendly manner.

Salmis, who had felt very uneasy when the major entered, was much encouraged by this reception. Rebecca hopped around, clapping her hands, which was her way of showing

emotion, and made to herself a long speech, to which no one listened. The dog Mufti, who had squeezed in, jumped about as if he were demented, springing up to the shoulder first of the major, then of some other person in the company, and jumped once so suddenly on Rindstädter, who had come in unperceived immediately behind the major, that he fell backwards on the sofa,—a place which his bashfulness had prevented him from ever taking before.

"My beloved Von Bomben," said the baroness, after she had somewhat recovered herself (though it had not been without having recourse to Rebecca's smelling-bottle), "you frightened me so dreadfully that I still tremble in all my limbs. I had not expected you for three or four hours still. But rest assured that I am inwardly thankful to Providence for having restored you to me; you whom I fancied—horrible idea!—to be swallowed up by the waves."

"Good, Marianna! good!" said the major. "Kiss me once more, and tell me if you feel strong enough to bear another surprise."

"For heaven's sake, Von Bomben," said the baroness, and waved her embroidered handkerchief again, "no more surprises. I cannot stand it."

"Halloo!" called the major, according to agreement; and in this prudent manner (he had promised to prepare his wife gradually) ushered in a young man, who instantly burst from him and rushed to his mother's seat. He fell on his knees before her, put his arms around her waist, and covered her hands with kisses.

"Albert!" cried they all at once.

But this surprise did not seem to have any injurious effect upon the baroness. She drew her son up and placed him on the sofa beside her. She looked at him with eyes beaming with a mother's love, wiped his forehead with her handkerchief, looked at him again, kissed him on the forehead and mouth, and finally laid her head on his shoulder and wept the sweet tears which only a mother's love can know.

The major had not taken his eyes off this group, formed of the mother and son embracing each other. Nature, when she stands forth in purity and strength, throws a halo around the most commonplace persons. There was no affectation, no vanity, to be discovered in the baroness at this time. She was

a true woman, a loving mother. The major felt tears coming into his eyes, so he went to a window for a few moments and looked out. He came back soon and took his son's place on the sofa, and, throwing his arm with as much gallantry as affection around his still undeniably handsome wife, kissed her hand, saying, "My dear wife, while I have been growing grayer and uglier—and heaven knows I was ugly enough before—you have grown handsomer, and I positively feel as much in love as in our honeymoon."

The baroness blushed, and looked around with a feeling of gratified vanity as well as affection.

Looking at his daughter, the major discovered symptoms of a great, and to him very gratifying, change. But, strange to say, when they had quieted down and everything seemed to be, so to speak, again on its old footing, there were evident signs of uneasiness on both sides. The major looked impatient and inquiring, and the baroness flourished her handkerchief and coughed slightly. Her lips trembled, and she opened and closed them without bringing forth any sound. Everything seemed to indicate that she was anxious to introduce some subject.

The major noticed it, and seemed even to have been expecting it, as he said, in a quick and peculiar tone,—

"You have something to tell me, Marianna, my dear?"

"Oh, yes," said the baroness, looking very much frightened, "if I only dared."

"Say on," said the major, with evident anxiety.

"If I only dared," said the baroness.

"Speak out, my dear," said the major, with a look which he strove to make as mild as possible, but with an angry tone which he could not repress.

"But you will be angry," said the baroness, coaxingly.

"I am much more likely to become deranged," said the major, violently. "Out with it! out with it!"

"Well, then, dear Von Bomben," said the baroness, with a trembling voice; but here her courage failed her entirely, and instead of the expected intelligence one heard, "Yes, my dear Von Bomben, you made your journey like an adventurer. A man sixty years old!"

"Oh!" said the major, somewhat taken aback, "is that all? I did really feel like an adventurer after I was fairly on

the way. The devil only knows what Don Quixotic spirit came over me in Lübeck, but I heard such glowing descriptions of the comfort and rapidity with which the voyage could be made. I was assured, too, that I could be back much earlier than I was. I suppose I was myself to blame for not making sufficient inquiries, so that I took a steamer which went to the West India Islands instead of the one for New York. In addition to this we had a fearful storm, which I will describe to you to-morrow, which gave rise to the report which reached you that instead of being made boatswain's mate I had become fishmate" (meat).

"But, my dear friend," said the baroness, who wished to keep the major talking till she had recovered her courage, "why did you choose America?"

"Yes!" thundered the major, who forgot everything in his interest for this subject. "It was just America that I wanted to see. Had I not read with the greatest wonder the most astonishing and contradictory reports concerning that country where there is no king, but where the people govern themselves in an orderly manner? I wanted to see for myself."

"And what did you see, my beloved father?" said Clara, kissing the major's brown hand.

"What I saw?" repeated he. "Well," said he, "I saw a people who are certainly happy, though I could not see *how* they managed. I was quite repaid for my trouble, and my curiosity was satisfied, but I could not write the history of America. I will have much to relate to you, but will merely say that though America is a fine country Sweden is better."

Then there was a pause, which the baroness broke by saying, with a desperate effort, "*À propos*, dearest Von Bomben, have you not heard sundry reports since your return?"

"Reports? No," said the major, with an angry look. "What reports could I possibly have heard?"

"Oh!" said the baroness, trembling. "As you neared home I thought you might have heard some reports."

"No, I did not," said the major, stretching himself out angrily, so that the sofa creaked.

"Yes, my love," said the baroness, plunging headlong into the subject,— "talk about a wedding at Dunderviksborg?"

"Oh, yes," said the major; "I really did hear some such talk, but knew, of course, that it was pure gossip."

As he looked like a lion about to make a spring, Albert went and sat on the other end of the sofa.

"But it isn't gossip at all," said the baroness.

"What!" said the major, his eyebrows bristling up like a wild boar at bay.

The baroness trembled violently, so Albert touched his father on the shoulder and reminded him of his promise to keep his temper.

That had the desired effect.

"What do you mean," said the major, in a milder tone, "when you say it is not gossip?"

"Oh, yes; I mean," said the baroness—"but pray be patient and let me tell you the thing as it happened. You were gone, and we had no hope of ever seeing you again; I was naturally in your place."

"Be brief, my gracious mamma," whispered Clara to her mother; "papa is getting impatient."

Albert took his father's hand and held it between his.

The major looked dangerous, but said nothing.

"I was thus," resumed the baroness, "in your place."

"Death and torture!" screamed the major. "While you were waiting to hear if I had sunk or not could you quietly busy yourself with marriage-plots?"

It was an exciting moment, but Clara had a lucky inspiration. She went and sat on her father's knee, and put her hand on his gray head.

"For heaven's sake, father," whispered she in his ear, "be quiet till mamma finishes,—perhaps you will be satisfied."

The only satisfaction which Clara could expect for her father was that her mother should confess what plans they had formed, and ask his forgiveness for them all, as the engagements, which were now broken off, had never been formally announced.

"We had ascertained," said the baroness, "that we should never see you again. We had grieved for you deeply and tenderly as for one who had been buried." Clara's warm embrace persuaded the major that it was so. "But if sorrow has its claims and duties, so has love."

"Grief's claims seem to have been soon satisfied," said the major, whose white eyebrows had turned red; and Rind-

städter, who noticed it, sat down on the sofa-table, so that the major was now besieged on three sides.

"When I saw their mutual affection," continued the baroness, "as I could not disapprove of it I gave my consent."

The major tried to jump up, but as Clara was sitting on his knee, and Albert holding him back, he was forced to remain in his place, saying, "Am I dreaming or awake? Has the whole family, including Albert, conspired against me? But go on, Marianna; I swear to be quiet—sit still, I mean—though I should burst on the spot."

"Consequently," said the baroness, "you see before you a happy couple."

"Which couple?" asked the major, staring stupidly before him.

"Us, good father's brother," said Rebecca, taking Rindstädter's hand. He looked very much like a school-boy who has been called up to get a scolding before the whole class.

Rindstädter had not been present at the last "tea council," but he did not challenge the presentation, as the major had told him distinctly before his departure that he *must* marry Rebecca.

"Pour the water in the decanter over me, so that I may come to my senses," said the major. "Tell me yourself, John, is this a joke or sober earnest?"

"Earnest," said Rindstädter, faintly, trying in vain to slip his hand out of Rebecca's.

Albert's astonishment made him let go his father's arm. Rindstädter had carefully avoided mentioning in any of his letters the major's determination to unite him to Rebecca.

Father and son jumped up simultaneously, and the former, looking Albert full in the eyes, said, "Do you understand this? I don't." Albert merely frowned.

"I hope you are not displeased," said the baroness, placidly, "with my giving my consent to this match?"

"No, indeed!" screamed the major. "You have made me very happy. You knew how ardently I desired this match. I kiss you, my love, with great gratitude. Since you paid such deference to my wishes when you supposed me to be dead, I can easily forgive your thinking of merry-makings during your mourning."

Lieutenant Salmis now quietly left the room.

The major saw that he looked excited, and that awakened his own suspicions and dissatisfaction. Turning to the baroness, he said, "Is this all that I am to hear?"

"Wait," said the baroness; "you shall be satisfied. Did you not hear something in Stockholm about an engagement between Salmis and Clara?"

"That makes no difference," said the major, "whether I heard it or not. But what then?"

"All rumors," said the baroness, who was now in the humor for talking, "must have some foundation in truth."

"For mercy's sake," said the excited major, "spare me all your sentences and thoughts, and tell me the second part of your communication!"

"I can assure you such is not the case," said the baroness.

"What is it that is not so?" asked the major, violently. "Have not all reports some foundation in truth? In the devil's name what do you mean?"

"Oh," said the baroness, with dignity, "I did not mean that these had any foundation."

"I mean," said the major, in a passion, "that you are crazy, Marianna, and that if I wish to avoid the same fate I must go back to America. Is it not possible for you to tell me whether you have betrothed Clara and Salmis or not?"

"No, certainly not; they are not betrothed," said the baroness.

"They are not betrothed!" said the major, joyfully. "May God bless you for that! To tell the truth, I had feared to be obliged to act on my return in a manner which would have been highly unpleasant for us all."

"No, my dear," continued the baroness; "the children have a very kindly feeling for each other without knowing any real 'attachment.' Salmis's attentions to Clara have been an *amusante courtoisie*, and Clara has replied to them with a *coquetterie* with a sweetness and grace."

"Enough, old woman," interrupted the major. "You come now to a chapter which I have never read. It does not interest me at all. If there is no engagement I have heard enough, and am satisfied."

"You are mistaken, my old man," said the baroness, with suavity. "There has really been an engagement."

"There has really been an engagement?" said the major, this time without anger, but with a perplexed look. He looked at Albert, who was as much astonished as he, and then at each member of the family in turn, to see if insanity was the common lot in his family.

But the most disturbed person in the room was Clara. She, as we know, had not taken part in the "tea council," and had never told her mother that Bergström had betrayed his love for her, still less had she spoken of the change in her own feelings for him. "Clara is," said the baroness, with a very anxious look at her daughter,— "is betrothed to Mr. Bergström."

"Which Mr. Bergström?" said the major.

"The priest's son," explained the baroness, who thought that name sounded better than the under-officer's title.

"So, so; the sergeant," said the major, and sprang to his son's side. "Do you understand this?" said he; "if you do you are cleverer than I."

Clara was so startled that she grew pale and red by turns. Her love of truth was struggling with her idea of a daughter's duty. She did not wish to contradict her mother, who, she felt sure, was only carrying out the plan formed by the "tea society." She could not assent to what her mother said, so she remained silent.

"But is this the truth, the real truth, you are telling me?" said the major, solemnly, turning to Clara.

"Do not ask me, ask the others," said Clara, looking down at her sewing. Her father took her action for the embarrassment of a happy bride.

"That is the day's truth," Rebecca hastened to say, and the major doubted no more.

"Well," said he, "I hear that it is the truth. This marriage was my heart's desire, as your dearest mother knows, but I had not expected to get to work so quickly as your mother has done. Well, well, it does not matter; Bergström will not die a sergeant, if he lives a few years. But, my dear Marianna, how did it all happen?"

The baroness looked worried and bewildered as she replied, "I knew your wishes. I knew that Salmis's regard for Clara was only *courtoisie*. I saw that Bergström grew daily more in love with Clara, and that she fully returned his affection."

(Here she cast an anxious look at her daughter.) "I saw that she loved him." (She had seen nothing at all.)

"Clara!" said the major, and he jumped up and took her in his arms like a child and set her on his knee. "My dear girl, have you so much sense, have you so much discernment, as to fancy that silent and unpretending, but honorable and excellent young man?"

Clara was so glad to hear a question which she could conscientiously answer without mental reservation that she replied without hesitation, and in a tone which would have convinced the most sceptical, "Yes, my honored father, I esteem,—yes, I love Bergström."

"God bless you for it, my daughter!" said the major, kissing her on the forehead and mouth.

But now it was the poor baroness's turn to be astonished, and she was more astonished even than any of the others had been. She had not the least idea that Bergström and Clara loved each other, and, judging her daughter by herself, she had expected her to refuse most decidedly to marry the poor and not noble sergeant. Her consternation was so great that she could not rejoice that Clara offered no resistance to her father's will. She went into the next room, saying half aloud to herself, "My head is in such a whirl, I think Von Bomben is right; I must be crazy, or at least," with a certain air of resignation, "I shall soon be so."

"Well, my dear Albert," said the major,—"*en passant*, I thank you for your very sensible advice,—this is coming home to perfect happiness. I am thoroughly satisfied with petticoat government, and am very thankful to the newspapers which sent me to the bottom of the sea. I am glad, Marianna; but, spite of your explanations, I do not understand it all. But I am tired and need rest. Excuse me, my friends, if the wandering Ulysses takes his Penelope under his arm and disappears. Mamma and I will not sup with you this evening. Rebecca, my child, send us in some tea and bread and butter and cold chicken."

When they had got to the door the major stood still, turned round and said, "As sleepy as I am I must see Rindstädter kiss his bride. Ha! ha! John, let me see you do it!"

Rindstädter blushed to his ears; he had never kissed any

woman but his mother, and stepped backwards till he was stopped by the stove.

"What! the devil!" said the major, "is the fellow stubborn? Dear Rebecca,—aha!—Rindstädter is thinking of a *jeu de société* called *le puits d'amour*. Go to him and ask him how many feet of water are in the well, and give him as many kisses as there are feet."

As Rindstädter could not be persuaded to name the number of feet, Rebecca said there could only be one, and gave him one kiss, while the major clapped his hands.

After supper all went to their bedrooms, except Clara, who spent an hour in the drawing-room thinking how she should meet Bergström after what had passed between her and her parents.

Soon after the major and his wife had left the company a servant came and announced that Sergeant Bergström had come to congratulate the major on his safe return. He had heard the glad news that afternoon at the parsonage, and had immediately jumped on his horse and rode over to pay his respects; but, hearing that he had retired, he merely sent in his compliments and would return the next day.

"Tell Bergström," said the major, "to come up at once to my room; he is not to go away till he has seen me. I command him to stay."

The baroness was quite put out, but said she would meet Bergström in the hall. The major said that was quite unnecessary, so she sat down in a state of mind that can be better imagined than described.

The major went up to his smoking-room, where Bergström arrived nearly as soon as he. "Welcome, my honorable Bergström," said the major; "you are most heartily welcome. But don't stand there bowing, but come to my arms, as I am now to enjoy the great happiness of calling you my son."

The major stretched out his arms in vain, as surprise had nailed Bergström to the spot where he stood.

"So, so," said he; "no sheepishness, no insubordination."

"I have heretofore," said Bergström, meekly, "always been able to understand the major, but this time it is beyond my power. I neither know the cause nor the meaning of this joke."

"Am I joking?" said the astonished major. "I should be the last one to joke on such a subject. What! the devil! are there any more hindrances in the way?"

"Perhaps the major has not heard," said Bergström, "what took place in his absence?"

"Yes, sir!" said the major, in a triumphant tone, "and that is the very reason why I act as I do."

"Perhaps the major has mistaken me for Lieutenant Salmis," remarked Bergström, sorrowfully.

"What do you mean? I take you for Salmis!" cried the major, impatiently.

"There must be some misunderstanding," said Bergström. "Allow me to ask one question: does not the major know that Fröken Clara is engaged to Lieutenant Salmis?"

"No," said the major, angrily, "I know no such thing. But I do know that you and Clara are engaged. Why are you disputing thus with an old man who loves you?"

Bergström was touched, and asked, meekly, "May I ask who told the major that I was engaged to Fröken Clara?"

"Who?" screamed the major. "My wife, Clara, the whole family. Do you wish them to be all sworn in as witnesses?"

"Major," said Bergström, "will you be so good as to listen to me for one moment? I am as little engaged to your daughter as I dare hope for such happiness, spite of your kind promise to me."

"Well," said the major, "tell me one thing: do you love Clara?"

"Yes," said Bergström, faintly, "that is unfortunately true, but it is the only true thing in the whole story."

"Good," said the major; "and now another question: does Clara love you?"

"She love me!" said Bergström; "no, most decidedly not, although lately she has been kinder towards me and more considerate than formerly."

"And I can tell you most decidedly," said the major, "that she does love you; she told me so herself. And now, tell me, is my wife for or against this match?"

"That I cannot tell," replied Bergström, "only it would surprise me if the baroness had for a moment contemplated the possibility of my marrying her daughter."

"Good!" said the major. "I think I now see my way

clearly. We have all we need for a betrothal,—a boy and girl who love each other and parents who give their consent. Now ride home again and greet your parents for me, and invite them, in my name, and your brothers and sisters likewise, to dine with us to-morrow. If you come yourself, you can then, in the presence of both sets of parents, kiss your bride. And now, good-night."

Bergström tried to express his thanks, but could not get out a single word. He tried by a headlong ride home to divert the feeling of bliss which was about to overpower him.

When the major went back to his room he first smoked his pipe out, and then said,—

"My dear Marianna, I cannot imagine anything funnier than that your fear of me should have made you countermine your own intrigues so successfully; but you will see in a few years that you have secured the happiness of our children."

The baroness fell asleep with a prayer on her lips that Bergström might soon be promoted and called lieutenant.

We have not much more to relate. The betrothals took place in due form. Salmis remained three or four days after that ceremony, and met with all the sympathy he needed. He was, however, soon comforted, as he had no depth of feeling. When he was on the way to Stockholm the fresh wind playing on his face seemed to blow away all his sadness. He began to consider his courting as a romantic episode, and to think that a few years still of bachelorhood would be very enjoyable, and that it would really have been a pity to put his neck in the yoke so early.

Does the reader wish to know something more? The following spring the double wedding took place at Dunderviksborg. Salmis was there with the rank of captain. Dunkelstern was not there: he had been forced to leave the country for debt. Clara and Bergström received Gaddik as a wedding gift; and Rindstädter and Rebecca had really, according to the major's orders, bought Olbrygge and settled on it.

The major was respected by all his neighbors, so that these family festivities were a matter of rejoicing to the whole neighborhood. The major found it very hard to keep Rindstädter, on his wedding-day, from attending, as usual, to all sorts of details about the farm. The major himself was

ubiquitous, prepared all the toasts, scolded and hurried the servants, kissed mother and "the children," as the newly-married couples were called long after they left home. He put himself in order; his real metal cannons, which were to give forth their thunder the whole afternoon, knocked down Peter Mattson, who made some mistake in loading, and who was immediately handed a package of tobacco as a compensation. Mufti ran about as if he were demented, made the most dangerous jumps, and barked as incessantly as if he had been engaged as trumpeter.

And now I will lift for my readers the veil of the future, and show them how harmoniously father and son managed the estate, how proud the baroness became, in the course of time, of Bergström, and of the "wish-children," Albert and Clara, who had been added to the family at Gäddeås.

Rebecca and Rindstädter were happy, in their own way, with each other and with the three boys, who followed each other in rapid succession. Rindstädter was as busy as a farmer as ever, but was as fussy with his boys as a hen who has hatched ducklings.

III.

THREE AT ONCE.

A FARCE IN ONE ACT.

BY KAROLY KISFALUDY.

TRANSLATED FROM THE HUNGARIAN
BY MRS. FRANCES C. HENDERSON.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

LORÁNYI, *Counsellor's wife.*
ADÉLE, *the daughter of LORÁNYI's youngest brother.*
SANDOR ORMI.
MAURICE BALKAY.
LAJOS, *a huntsman.*
MARTHA, *the housekeeper.*
FÜLÖP, *servant of SANDOR ORMI.*
FÉRUS, *servant of MAURICE BALKAY.*

SCENE, LORÁNYINÉ'S country-seat.

THE scene lies in a small but lovely valley. In the middle is a hermitage, in front of which is a tree with a bench round the trunk; all around are forests.

ORMI *in the garb of a hermit.*

ORMI. If they would only bring me word! Upon my soul! I'm in a nice mess. This hut is a real owl's nest, and it is full of flies. This hair shirt is frightfully hot. I am nearly suffocated. [*He looks all around.*] No one is in sight; I can throw back my hood, and perhaps I shall breathe easier. Hm, hm! what will not a man do to get a rich girl? I, the most thorough worldling, a hermit! ha, ha, ha! Jupiter secured such favors more easily, as a swan and as golden rain;

but I, poor child of earth, am no such conjurer. Bless me! am I to lie on the ground? Ha! some one comes; now I must behave with dignity. [*He pulls up his cowl and sits down on the bench.*] Let me be meditating.

、 MARTHA comes.

MARTHA. Good-day, honored sir!

ORMI. Welcome, my sweet girl. What have you brought?

MARTHA. The Hajduk Andor announced your worship, and my gracious lady willingly grants your wish. She has no objection to your taking possession of the hermitage, and will look in upon you before long.

ORMI. So! And who are you, my sweet girl?

MARTHA. My name is Martha. I am a respectable widow, and housekeeper at the castle. Here, I bring you the key of your dwelling.

ORMI. Thanks, my love.

MARTHA. My love! No, no, we know better than that; oh! the last hermit, now resting in God, he has chatted many an hour with me here.

ORMI. I offer my services, my dear young lady.

MARTHA. And I am at your service, in all things honest.

ORMI. I will at once ask a little favor of your kind heart. It is, my dear daughter, that you should give me some little insight into the household arrangements, and introduce me, as it were, in imagination to the family. [*He pinches her cheek.*]

MARTHA. How gallant you are, honored father, and how soft and white your hand is! It is easy to see that you have meditated more than you have labored. So you wish to know our house. That is the easiest thing in the world. The head of the house is the high-born Lorányi, Counsellor's wife, a very rich lady, but a good woman; proud, always reminding you of her ancestry, but a good woman; stingy, but a good woman; always scolding, but a very good woman.

ORMI. In a word, an awfully good soul. I understand you, my dear daughter; but I think you just now mentioned a young lady.

MARTHA. That is Miss Adèle, the daughter of my lady's youngest brother, an orphan who will some day be very rich, and who rides the high horse on that account. She is, how-

ever, a good creature and knows nothing of the world. She seldom leaves home, going at the most to the neighboring town to do a little shopping.

ORMI. So?

MARTHA. Besides that, she is betrothed.

ORMI. Be—be—trothed!

MARTHA. Why are you surprised, honored father? and why do you chop your words so?

ORMI. Oh, I am not at all surprised. So, so, she is betrothed.

MARTHA. Yes; but according to the custom of the grand people she does not know her betrothed. The father of the young man, Mr. *Zodany, arranged it all with the high-born aunt; so she is a bride, but has never seen the young man.

ORMI. Hm, hm! And this bridegroom?

MARTHA. I have heard that he is on his way. If he comes there will be a wedding, but when I do not know.

ORMI. So there is no man about the house?

MARTHA. There is one Lajos, the huntsman, who was recommended by the bridegroom's father, but he stays out of doors. But the rascal is arrogant! Just think: he looks down even upon me, and yet I am the highest person in the castle, after my gracious lady.

ORMI. Be comforted, my dear daughter; pride must have a downfall. [*He pinches her cheek.*] Such a worthy woman!

MARTHA. He, he, he! Your worship has such a pleasant manner! So you stay with us? Do let me ask you one question: why have you turned hermit? You are evidently still in your best years, your eyes are bright——

ORMI. I have renounced the world.

MARTHA. Yes; but why?

ORMI. I will tell you that another time, my dear daughter; it would require days,—nay, months.

MARTHA. Oh, I do love such unhappy ones! I love them. Now you *must* stay. Even on my bed I think of them. The last holy hermit died upon straw, but he was old and a different kind of person from your worship. No wonder! he had been scullion in a monastery, and came from there here. Now I must go; all is so far in order. [*Goes.*]

ORMI. Ha, ha, ha! So I have made a conquest of that cracked old bell; but I can make use of her, only I shall not

make a confidante of such a chatterbox. If the young lady would only come! If she is so innocent I shall win the game so much the more easily. If I can only win her heart, the old dragon may watch and the bridegroom may come. If there is no other way I shall steal her. [*Sits in a dignified manner on the bench.*]

MARTHA comes.

MARTHA. After all, I forgot the most important thing,—to tell you what provision is made for your support. Every day you get a little bread with goat's cheese or soup. You will find the clearest of springs bubbling up in the grass yonder, when it does not freeze.

ORMI. Oh! oh! [*Aside.*] A pleasant prospect!

MARTHA. Every lesser saint's day and Sunday you get a little meat, and every great feast a drink of wine.

ORMI. Oh, I am used to abstinence.

MARTHA. No, no; believe me, we know how to shut our eyes. Every one must step aside sometimes, and so holy a man just as well as the rest of us. We shall see each other again. [*Goes.*]

ORMI. Hell devil! Bread, goat-cheese, water! I shall get thin and this love-affair into the bargain! Let me look at the hut. [*He peeps in.*] Ah! a beautiful palace, empty, but dark, and for company within mosquitoes and spiders, and for ornament a skull! Much obliged; I am making a great sacrifice, but I shall not regret it if I win the girl. [*He claps his hands three times.*]

FÜLÖP, looking out from the thicket.

FÜLÖP. I hear, master.

ORMI. Did you bring what I need?

FÜLÖP. Here are writing materials.

ORMI. Put them on the table. [*FÜLÖP does so.*] I shall need a pistol also; the wolves may be prowling round at night.

FÜLÖP. I understand.

ORMI. I must expect very meagre fare here. Here is money, go to the tavern and get some meat and a couple of bottles of wine; but be careful,—creep through the bushes, so that no one may see you.

FÜLÖP. I understand, sir.

ORMI. And if you find any books in the tavern borrow them. [FÜLÖP goes.] Now I must take a look at the spring; my heart needs cooling and my eyes shade.

BALKAY, *in a monk's garb, and FÉRUS come stealthily.*

FÉRUS. I do not see any one. This, master, is the hermitage of which we heard; yesterday still no one had taken possession of it, and I have already related to your honor all about the house.

BALKAY. Were you in the castle?

FÉRUS. I tried to get in, but the castle is surrounded by a ditch. There is only one gate, and by it stands a very muscular hajduk, who lets in no strangers. I tried to push by him, but the palm of his hand is the size of this table. I entreated, but he was deaf; I offered him money, but he took up a cudgel.

BALKAY. Then I must wait here; this garb will help me. Now go, hide yourself in the thicket. If I need you I shall whistle.

FÉRUS. I wish your honor success. [Goes.]

BALKAY. Let me stop to consider. From my superficial acquaintance with the circumstances here, it will not be hard work to win the rich and beautiful girl. If I only had an ally in the castle! This, then, is my dwelling. [He goes to the hut.] Luckily, the door is open. [He peeps in.] What! writing materials, firearms? Some one must be here. I will rest on this bench till some one sees me. [Sits down.]

ORMI comes.

ORMI. Excellent water! Now for my ambush—but what do I see? Who is sitting on the bench? Is it my imagination, or is it really a hermit?

BALKAY. What do I see? A hermit! What ill wind brings him here? Now I must resort to a lie!

ORMI. How must I address him? God with us, domine confrater. Whence come you? what do you want?

BALKAY. I am an old man, taking leave of the world, but my feet are weaker than my will, and hearing of this hermitage I came here to rest for a few days, not suspecting that it already had an occupant.

ORMI. I came with the permission of the owners, and hope to end my days here in peace.

BALKAY. So much the better, as I may then count upon being well received.

ORMI. With all my heart, domine confrater, but the hut is small, and it would not be possible for me to provide for our joint wants, much as I should like the companionship of so good a man.

BALKAY. Not at all; I only need a little earth on which to rest my weary body, and that I shall easily find here.

ORMI. Very fine; but just now—you must know, domine confrater, that there are often circumstances where it is a man's chief wish to get something which he cannot get.

BALKAY. That is true with respect to the children of this world, but we have other views. Besides, I believe that this garb makes us brothers, and requires us to be serviceable to one another.

ORMI. [*Aside.*] Curse the fellow! I cannot shake him off. This old man might talk about me and make people suspect me; but if any one comes to me I shall lock the door.

BALKAY. [*Aside.*] How long he reflects about it! But I must say I am not surprised he does not care to entertain strangers in such a hole; but I will not get off his neck.

ORMI. Although I seek solitude, brotherly love has conquered in my heart; so, domine confrater, we will divide the dwelling, and thus we will both have room. If you please, domine confrater, we will go into the hut. [*They go in.*]

LORÁNYINÉ, ADÉLE, and MARTHA come.

LORÁNYINÉ. I cannot refrain from speaking, my dear niece. I do not mind a young lady's enjoying herself; indeed, it is pleasant to see her do so; only she should never forget what she owes to good blood and to her high ancestry. Can one conceive such thoughtlessness, such an ignoble impulse, as to make a moustache with ink to one of your ancestors?

ADÉLE. Do not be angry, dear aunt; I do not see myself how I came to do it.

LORÁNYINÉ. You had better give a different excuse, and say at once that you have no idea of refinement.

ADÉLE. But I am sure the old gentleman looks better than with such a smooth-shaven face.

LORÁNYINÉ. And do you know what a distinguished man it was that you smeared in that way? He was a leading star in our nation and family. When King Sigismund, of blessed memory, went to Rome to be crowned emperor, he accompanied him! Think of that! Does not your heart swell with pride? One of our ancestors was in Rome, a companion of the emperor!

ADÉLE. Oh, dear aunt, that was so long ago.

LORÁNYINÉ. Listen to me, child. It is of our ancestors that I am talking. When a man has no ancestors he is not of a good family, and if he is not of a good family he is not a man. Such a man belongs to the populace; we must consider him as so much dirt. *Our genealogical tree, thank God, requires two ells of paper, and could even use three to advantage.*

ADÉLE. Ha, ha, ha! so we measure ourselves by the ell.

LORÁNYINÉ. You are a child, you never understand; you can never comprehend what you do not see with your eyes.

ADÉLE. Ah, dear aunt, when will dinner be ready? Believe me, I can hardly wait.

LORÁNYINÉ. If you go on this way your mind will not be ripe in four years.

ADÉLE. By that time I will be old enough for an ancestor.

LORÁNYINÉ. Here you show sense, but by that time you will probably understand the value of ancestry; but this much you must know, that you may now any day be called upon to give up your young ladyhood.

ADÉLE. I do not understand.

LORÁNYINÉ. He, he! you will understand some time, my little dove.

ADÉLE. Pray explain it to me.

LORÁNYINÉ. So, so; he, he! Wait a little, it is not yet time. We will speak of that another time. Ho, Martha!

MARTHA. My honored lady.

LORÁNYINÉ. Where is the present hermit? I wish to see him, but he is not here.

MARTHA. Then he must be in the hut. I will see presently. [*She knocks at the door.*] Honored father!

ORMI. I hear, I hear. [*Standing in the doorway to BALKAY.*] Domine confrater, keep still. [*In going out he locks the door.*]

MARTHA. The gracious Lady Lorányiné, the Counsellor's wife, graciously wishes to see your worship.

ORMI. Your ladyship has such beautiful hair, I would like to leave my blessing on it.

ADÉLE. Hi, hi, hi!

MARTHA. How can my young lady laugh at such a time? It is not suitable; you are too free.

ADÉLE. Just come here, Martha. He did not give aunt the blessing; he thinks she wears a wig.

MARTHA. Heaven forbid! How could he think of such a thing?

ORMI. May heaven give the young lady as much happiness as such rare beauty deserves. [*To himself.*] What lovely eyes, what a figure, what vivacity! [*BALKAY pokes his head out of the window.*]

LORÁNYINÉ. What are you saying?

ORMI. I sent a short prayer up to heaven for the welfare of your ladyship's house.

BALKAY. [*To himself.*] There she is. What a graceful figure, what a round, full form, and what a tiny foot!

LORÁNYINÉ. As I understand, you wish to settle here as a hermit?

ORMI. That is my ardent wish.

LORÁNYINÉ. I have nothing against it. Such a garb is a specialty of olden times,—of those times in which my ancestors lived. But what can you do? I do not care to support you in idleness.

ORMI. I pray for your ladyship's house.

LORÁNYINÉ. That is very well; but you might also do something else. The deceased hermit was forester, rang the bell, and occasionally worked in the garden.

ORMI. [*Aside.*] What a creature! I'm in a pretty pickle!

BALKAY. [*To himself.*] It is well that I am a stranger; I can spare myself.

ORMI. As far as my advanced age permits, I do not draw back from any service, particularly out of the house.

LORÁNYINÉ. Where were you formerly?

ORMI. I—verily, [*Aside*] what can I say? [*Aloud.*] I begged for the orphans: an early inspiration from above prompted me to renounce the world and to devote myself to meditation in solitude. Above all things I love the beauties

of nature. I could teach the young lady so many beautiful things, and good, which I have learned in my contemplations.

LORÁNYINÉ. We shall see. But to what family do you belong?

ORMI. Excuse me; when I put on this garb I took an oath not to reveal my name.

MARTHA. What a pity! The name will die out and be forgotten.

LORÁNYINÉ. But why should you keep it secret? If I remember well, at one time even kings wore this garb. King Solomon, of whom history speaks so often, was a hermit.

ADÉLE. But when there was war he fought well.

MARTHA. [*Looks at the window and falls backwards on the ground.*] How heaven honors the pious souls! The ghost of the deceased hermit! Look! look! He is looking out of the window by broad daylight!

LORÁNYINÉ. What old head is that?

BALKAY. [*To himself.*] She is going to make a forester of me.

ORMI. A poor colleague, who was taken ill on his way to a church festival, and hearing of the noble-mindedness of your ladyship's ancestry, came here for a few days' rest. I received him in the hut till I should ascertain your ladyship's pleasure in the matter.

MARTHA. Ah! but he gave me a fright! I cannot imagine why he stuck his head out there. Send him away, my lady!

ADÉLE. The poor man came here to rest; why should he not remain here a few days? Will you not allow it, dear aunt?

LORÁNYINÉ. Let him appear before us.

ORMI. I will call him at once. Domine confrater!

MARTHA. That is better.

LORÁNYINÉ. We must learn if he comes of a good house.

BALKAY comes.

BALKAY. May Fortune empty her whole treasury on your ladyship's house. I, poor wanderer, beg you from my heart to grant my request, and to allow me to rest here a few days, for which goodness I shall be eternally thankful. Otherwise I live in Bakony, where I am collector for the orphans

and widows; in this manner I have the satisfaction of knowing that I am laboring for the good of humanity.

LORÁNYINÉ. Thank heaven, times are improving, and the good old pious customs are coming back to us! I have no objection to your spending a few days here, and, as the hut is small, one of you can come to the castle. [*They go.*]

MARTHA. I will prepare a place and then come back. [*She goes.*]

BALKAY. My best thanks. [*Aside.*] In the castle I shall have an opportunity.

ORMI. He must remain here. [*To BALKAY.*] Domine confrater, as you would scarcely be able to secure the needed repose amid the bustle and noise at the castle, I will sacrifice myself to brotherly love and go to the castle.

BALKAY. No, domine confrater; as you had already made choice of this place for your pious life, I will not disturb your pious meditations, and I will go to the castle.

ORMI. No, domine confrater; as you are a stranger, I consider it much more delicate that I should give way and go to the castle.

BALKAY. Even on that account, domine confrater, I will not impose upon your goodness, and, as a stranger, I shall go to the castle.

ORMI. [*Suffocating with rage.*] And I believe, domine confrater, that decency requires that I should go.

BALKAY. [*Angrily.*] Excuse me, domine confrater; I consider hospitality as the first duty: "yield thou to the stranger."

MARTHA comes with a basket.

MARTHA. Was I not quick?

ORMI. Like a good thought.

MARTHA. [*To BALKAY.*] Is your worship going to the castle?

BALKAY. Of course; let us go at once.

ORMI. My dear daughter, this pious man prefers remaining here. I go to the castle. [*In a whisper.*] Let us talk as if we had a private understanding.

MARTHA. [*In a whisper.*] That is a good idea. Your worship is the man for me.

BALKAY. I understood that her ladyship invited me.

MARTHA. So did I. [*She looks at ORMI.*] This one

can come with me. Your worship may thank me that I have brought provisions; in this basket you will find bread and goat's cheese.

ORMI. And in the grass yonder bubbles a cool spring. But I think, my dear daughter, we had better go at once.

MARTHA. That is as your worship wishes. [*She leaves with ORMI.*]

BALKAY. That hermit is a rough, unpolished man, but it is doubtless owing to his education. He seems to seek the worldly goods which he has renounced. I must sit on this bench and contemplate the heavens. [*He sits on the bench.*] I have engaged in a ticklish business, but the object is worthy of some sacrifice. Beautiful! but that would not be enough: but so rich! That is the spring without which nothing can run in this world, and without which even the pleasures of love soon come to an end.

FÜLÖP comes with a basket.

FÜLÖP. Pszt! pszt!

BALKAY. [*To himself.*] A servant! What can he want?

FÜLÖP. Aha! there he sits. I have brought the meat and wine, and also some books.

BALKAY. Who are you? what do you want? What are you staring at me for?

FÜLÖP. The gentleman—your worship—formerly there was another hermit here.

BALKAY. He went to the castle.

FÜLÖP. [*Aside.*] Oh, he is in luck!

BALKAY. Who is your master?

FÜLÖP. In the neighborhood—I shall not tell you. Your servant, sir.

BALKAY. Sit down here by me, I wish to speak with you. You can leave the basket with me in full confidence. Give it here, my son; don't struggle. [*He carries off the basket.*]

FÜLÖP. [*Aside.*] I don't know what to do.

BALKAY. Come, sit down by me. Who is your master?

FÜLÖP. He lives in this neighborhood, but he does not wish people to talk about his good deeds. But I suppose he would give to you as well as to any other hermit. [*To himself.*] I can't help it if I have done wrong; if I could only find my master! [*He goes.*]

BALKAY. This hermit must be a great rascal, since the servants bring him things openly. Let us see what there is. Ah! a capon, two bottles of wine; I shall use these alms, as the prospect for my stomach is poor enough. What books are there? Baron de Maux. The Child of Love! Is that suitable reading for a hermit? Now I must go into the hut and write a note, and see if I cannot find some way to get it into the young lady's hands. [*He goes off with the basket.*]

ADÉLE comes.

ADÉLE. Ha, ha, ha! I have escaped from my old aunt. If Lajos would only come! With that exception I have only before me the images of old bearded creatures, who look as if Time had ploughed deep with them. I am frightfully curious to know how my bridegroom looks. I should laugh myself to death if he were as stiff as those old pictures in there. How happy I could be with him if he were like Lajos! But so—— Oh, heavens, but I feel sad!

LAJOS comes.

LAJOS. So, alone, my sweet young lady?

ADÉLE. How you frightened me, you naughty boy! I won't say that I was thinking about you. Whence do you come?

LAJOS. From the forest.

ADÉLE. What did you shoot? what have you brought?

LAJOS. Nothing.

ADÉLE. That is not much; you are a bad huntsman, Lajos.

LAJOS. I heard a nightingale, and went after it, but I could not shoot it, as I fancied Adéle was singing. I saw a dove, but could not shoot it, because it looked as gentle as Adéle. I saw a deer, but could not shoot it, because it was as graceful as Adéle.

ADÉLE. And if you saw a fox you could not shoot it, because its eyes look as roguish as yours. You are a bad huntsman, Lajos.

LAJOS. I would do better if I had not always something else before my eyes. If I see a violet, I immediately think of Adéle. A lily of the valley reminds me of Adéle's fair

face. All that is beautiful and pure reminds me of Adèle. But what is the matter with my young lady to-day?

ADÈLE. I am grieving about my bridegroom. If you could only carry him away, Lajos, how I should thank you!

LAJOS. Oh, willingly; but——

ADÈLE. But what? Be obliging.

LAJOS. Would the bridegroom be willing to go?

ADÈLE. Aunt is always saying, "A woman's kingdom is her house," therefore I have to speak here, and I order it.

LAJOS. Ah, my sweet young lady!

ADÈLE. Why do you sigh? Do you not like living in the country? I would also rather live in town, where you see plenty of nice people, and where you meet your acquaintances on the street; but aunt always says, "So long as you are unmarried you should have no wishes." Lajos, do you peep out from under your cap, as the gentlemen do in town? I can almost hear how they abuse the veil which aunt hung over my portrait.

LAJOS. A man's wishes reach even unto the stars; I also am attracted by beautiful eyes.

ADÈLE. And do mine attract you? Look at me, Lajos.

LAJOS. Indeed, I have looked, and they shoot right into my heart.

ADÈLE. Listen to the hunter; he talks of shooting. If you were shot through the heart you could not live.

LAJOS. Indeed, a man can live when he is shot through the heart; but what a miserable life it is I know from my own experience.

ADÈLE. Do not talk with such a thick voice, you make me sad, and I shall have time enough to be sad when my bridegroom comes. Lajos, I want to ask you something; tell me, candidly, have you ancestors?

LAJOS. It is possible, but I do not know.

ADÈLE. Bad enough; it is a great pity. Do you love anybody?

LAJOS. What does that matter? Of what use would ancestors be to an empty purse?

ADÈLE. What do I care about your purse? Where there is love that is more useful than anything else.

LAJOS. Ah, my sweet young lady, if love were only free!

ADÉLE. And why should it not be? That is no one's business except mine.

LAJOS. Then if love is not forbidden, whom does my young lady love?

ADÉLE. Do *you* know how to love? I am not talking of myself.

LAJOS. But, my kind, sweet young lady, love is the highest happiness.

ADÉLE. Don't look at me so; I simply say I trust Lajos—— Oh, me! what have I said? If aunt should find it out!

LAJOS. Adéle! my darling Adéle!

ADÉLE. Do you know that it is not suitable for you to say such words to me. I shall soon get angry, and we cannot so soon belong to one another. Do you understand? Nothing can come out of it.

LAJOS. Even if such unhappiness is in store for me I am now happy.

ADÉLE. Lajos, I painted the picture of one of my ancestors. You can clean it, and I will help. [*She runs away.*]

LAJOS. No! those eyes cannot deceive; I am content. Adéle! [*He goes.*]

BALKAY *comes out of the hut.*

BALKAY. My stomach is now in order and my letter written. If I only had an opportunity I should send it to her at once. I must have help from some one, but from whom? The hermit? He is as obstinate as an old wolf, but I believe for good pay he would do it. Ha! look! there he is. But why has he left the castle?

ORMI *comes.*

ORMI. Domine confrater, did I not return soon? I opposed your wish just now; but I feel that I sinned against brotherly love, and I yield you the place in the castle, where you will be better off than here. The good young lady will attend to you as if you were her own father.

BALKAY. The young lady?

ORMI. Excuse me, domine confrater, for having been somewhat rude just now, but know that a new lodging is a man's delight, and for good things—*de sapienti sat!*

BALKAY. Enough, my good father. I see that you are a

good man, and your good heart encourages me to place confidence in you. Know, then, that I am no hermit. I am Maurice Balkay.

ORMI. Hell devil! Two foxes after one goose!

BALKAY. I astonish you, my good father, but so it is. I only put on this garb on account of the young lady, as otherwise, on account of the aunt, it is not possible to approach her.

ORMI. That was very sensible.

BALKAY. I saw her for a moment in town, and having inquired into her circumstances, I determined, if possible, to secure her for myself. I think your worship could play into my hands, and that you could conscientiously help me in this matter.

ORMI. The success of the undertaking requires that we should deceive the old woman, and I shall willingly help you to do it. You could not have chosen a better confederate than myself. The great difficulty is that the young lady is a bride.

BALKAY. On that account we must hurry, and not lose a single moment.

ORMI. But when I reflect, the girl is frightfully rich.

BALKAY. That is the main thing, my dear father. Here, I give you something in advance; [*Gives him a purse*] and if my plan succeeds your worship shall be satisfied.

ORMI. You certainly oblige me to gratitude; and now I shall go at once to the castle so as to be able to serve you more promptly.

BALKAY. Take care of this letter, my dear father, and give it into her hands; if I should accidentally meet her before that I can explain myself without the letter.

ORMI. Excellent! thus we cannot fail to win: your grace within, I without; but now for the castle.

BALKAY. But I must tell you one thing, my dear father. A servant out of the neighborhood brought you meat and wine, but, do not get angry, I ate it.

ORMI. Do not mention it. There will be enough left for me.

BALKAY. Oh, no. I ate it all.

ORMI. Indeed! Oh, blessed appetite! [*Aside.*] I only pray that he may get the colic.

BALKAY. But I promise you that for every drink I took you shall get a keg.

ORMI. Thanks ; but now I must go.

BALKAY. Do you not see something white yonder ? Oh, it is she !

ORMI. It is only old Martha. I shall send her away ; but I must speak with her first. Go ! go ! [BALKAY goes.]

Ha, ha, ha ! So that is your game. You want that rich girl, do you ? Wait, see how nicely I shall help you. I am nearly blinded by this frightful heat ; he drank all my wine and left me only water. I shall not care if I only get the girl. That fool Fülöp ; but it is well that he did not betray me. Ha, ha, ha ! Only see how the dark hole looks where they pitied the poor hermit. It is lucky for me that Martha has taken a fancy to me. Here they come.

MARTHA comes with ADÉLE.

MARTHA. Believe me, my dear young lady, I am convinced that some great personage is hidden under our hermit, perhaps some count, who from unhappy love or any other reason has renounced the world ; but they must be great reasons, frightfully great reasons. I had arranged for him the room next to the hen-house, but he would not stay there, because he loves Nature ; that drives him away from all companionship. So it is ; but little by little I shall worm all out of him.

ADÉLE. I feel great sympathy with the old man, because he is so poor.

ORMI. I greet you heartily, beautiful young lady. [To MARTHA.] My dear daughter, I send my companion, the other hermit, to the castle. Poor fellow, he is quite unaccustomed to the ways of the world, and does not understand the proprieties. Go with him, my dear daughter, and settle him, so that he can rest. I will entertain the young lady in the mean time.

MARTHA. Good ; but keep the most important things till I get back. Always running about in this heat ! [She goes.]

ADÉLE. I am curious to know how the father is going to entertain me.

ORMI. Ah, sweet young lady, love is the only subject which can interest so young a heart.

ADÉLE. Ha, ha, ha ! Does a father know anything about love ?

ORMI. We are born for that, and for that we die.

ADÉLE. Father, love sounds badly in your mouth ; let us talk of something else.

ORMI. That is the power of beauty, that it infuses life into everything, that it makes everything young, and that as spring covers the earth with flowers, so it excites a sweet desire and longing in the heart, so powerful a fairy is a beautiful young lady.

ADÉLE. But do tell me, father, how I am to understand that ; a fairy moves among the clouds, I only walk on earth.

ORMI. But you transform that earth into a garden of Eden. Sweet young lady, how I have longed for this hour, when I could speak to you without witnesses, and tell you that seeing you once has filled my heart with fire and transformed me into your most ardent admirer !

BALKAY *comes.*

ORMI. He who sighs in secret for this heart is happy when he stands within the enchanted circle, as I do at this moment, when he can seize this little velvet hand, as I do at this moment, when he dare press it to his lips, as I do at this moment.

BALKAY. [*Aside.*] He is talking of me at this moment, but still it is better that she should hear all directly from me. [*To ADÉLE.*] My sweet young lady, at last I can enjoy such happiness. I confirm all that this honored father has said. Is it not true ? He spoke of a young gentleman whose only thought is Adéle, whose only desire is Adéle, who only lives for one angel, and that angel is Adéle.

ORMI. [*Aside.*] Hell devil ! I could also give my fancy play on that subject.

BALKAY. Know, therefore, my sweet young lady, the secret which brings life or death to me.

ADÉLE. Ha, ha, ha ! A secret leave-taking.

BALKAY. Here I take my leave ; here shines the great treasure which attracts me so powerfully. [*Secretly to ORMI.*] I depart, at such a time I could not keep my incognito.

ORMI. You hear, my sweet young lady, what that old man said of a youth who, under the disguise of a hermit, would gladly carry off the young lady, who loves so ardently, who is so rich——

ADÉLE. I?

BALKAY. [*Whispers.*] What are you saying? I depart; I am too angry.

ORMI. I wish you success.

MARTHA comes.

MARTHA. Just look at that man. There they stand. I asked the doorkeeper if he saw a hermit enter, he said no. I scolded him for not paying attention, and even abused him. Why did not your worship send the other hermit? Do you think we can stand upon ceremony with such a stranger? We have no time for that.

BALKAY. [*To himself.*] Accursed creature! I could choke you; you have spoiled everything. [*Whispers to ADÉLE.*] Sweet young lady, I hope to have the pleasure in the castle. Till then my letter will explain everything.

MARTHA. What business has your worship whispering to my young lady? When you are not looking up to the skies, you ought to keep your eyes on the ground.

BALKAY. Go along; don't be so restless! [*Whispers to ORMI.*] For the love of heaven, manage matters so that I may have a private conversation with the young lady!

MARTHA. My gracious, but you stir my bile! Are you coming?

BALKAY. I'm coming, my good mother.

MARTHA. Good mother, indeed! Look at the creature who is so old and has no manners yet! My name is Mrs. Martha; do you understand? [*Goes off with BALKAY.*]

ADÉLE. My dear father, he who has left us does really speak as if he had lost his reason. Where is the letter of which he speaks?

ORMI. Will you have the goodness to give it to the old lady? She will know what to do about it.

ADÉLE. But on the letter is written "To the beautiful Adéle, in the region of the stars from the most profound love."

ORMI. All deceit! My young lady must not trust any one but me; and if you do not give this letter immediately to your gracious aunt I shall tell her about it myself, and then won't there be an explosion! He who wrote it is a selfish creature, who wishes under the cover of love to advance his own interested aims. I, on the contrary, am an honest ad-

mirer. I do not seek wealth, but only a good, innocent heart. Know, my dear young lady——

LAJOS comes.

LAJOS. Miss! miss!

ORMI. [*Aside.*] This fellow might have come at some other time.

ADÉLE. Is that you, Lajos? Come here; see what a funny love-letter the old father has written me. He says he adores me.

LAJOS. A love-letter! your adorer!

ORMI. Oh! I beg you; only deep respect. [*To himself.*] Frightful! this girl is innocent to the verge of stupidity!

ADÉLE. Do you know what, Lajos? I am a fairy, a star; it is written here. Come, we will read it. [*She reads quietly with LAJOS.*]

ORMI. [*To himself.*] If she places such confidence in the huntsman it is no wonder that he is always around. Perhaps I can make an ally of the fellow. Why not? Fair words, a promise, a gift, will attach him to me.

ADÉLE. Ha, ha, ha! that is a beautiful letter! I did not know that it was possible to write with such elegance. What warmth, what depth of feeling it betrays! I am really happy, —I never received a love-letter before.

LAJOS. So? I am glad of it!

ADÉLE. What is the matter, Lajos? I am sure it is prettier than our genealogical tree.

ORMI. My dear young lady, I have already requested you to show this letter to your aunt.

LAJOS. Yes, yes! If you wish it I will take it and give it to her.

ADÉLE. No; I will take it to her at once; the hermit is also there. [*She goes.*]

LAJOS. The letter is doubtless from you, my father?

ORMI. Yes; but I do not think it will be of much use.

LAJOS. Who knows, sir? [*He tries to go.*]

ORMI. Look here; one word more. Hear me, young man. I like you. I see such manly daring in your eyes that I feel as if I should like to have you for my friend.

LAJOS. I am pleased to hear it.

ORMI. Let us get better acquainted.

LAJOS. I am willing.

ORMI. When I look at you I feel angry with fate which made you a simple huntsman in the forest, whereas in some other position you might have made yourself a name.

LAJOS. I am content.

ORMI. But you cannot remain long even in this humble position.

LAJOS. How is that?

ORMI. In the house all the servants are against you.

LAJOS. Ha, ha, ha! I am sorry to hear it, but shall not worry myself about their enmity.

ORMI. But it is so; Martha told me. You are arrogant, therefore they slander you. Hear me, young man. I will make amends for fate's neglect and make you chief forester, which is a very honorable position. Besides that, I will give you a good round sum of money.

LAJOS. Your worship!

ORMI. I must tell you my secret, for as a hermit I am helpless, and live so miserably that I cannot stand it more than a day or two. Know, then, that I have only assumed this garb out of love for the young lady.

LAJOS. So? And who may you be?

ORMI. My name is Sandor Ormi. I saw Adèle in town and inquired into her circumstances, and so felt a wish to know her better. I hear that there is a bridegroom whom I must cut out. As he does not seem to care to come, I hope to attain my end. You must help me.

LAJOS. I?

ORMI. You are outside and have plenty of time. When I talk with her you can stand there and watch. And if you hear of anything in the castle that I can use to lure the girl to me, let me know. If I can once win her heart I should not be afraid of a troop of bridegrooms.

LAJOS. But that other gentleman?

ORMI. I think the old lady will settle him. Besides, he is a very old man and stingy, and you will find it much more advantageous to serve me. [*He gives him the purse he had received from BALKAY.*] You can see that, can't you?

LAJOS. Oh, certainly! and I will attend to the business so as to give satisfaction.

ORMI. It will be to your advantage, even more than to

mine. You will be a gentleman, and need not serve any more; do you understand?

LAJOS. Now, sir, I am going.

ORMI. Lajos, bring me news how things are going on within.

LAJOS. I hear, sir. [*He goes.*]

ORMI. How much easier it is for a man to get along if he only understands human nature, and if he knows whom to approach and whom to use! Ha, ha, ha! just look at Balkay; he thinks I am going to play the young lady into his hands. I think his love-making is a help to me, and at any rate I have become paymaster. Ha, ha, ha! there comes Balkay, and from what I see he is feeling the effects of that basket.

BALKAY comes.

BALKAY. May the devil take that silly country bride! The silly creature showed my letter to her aunt, and she is as mad as a setting hen when she sees a hawk. I had to run for fear she should order the hajduk to help me off with the sole of his foot. [*He throws off his hermit's garb.*] What I have suffered from this accursed woman's gown is in vain, not to speak of wearing this thick wig in this fearful heat.

ORMI. Ha, ha, ha! What is to become of the hermit?

BALKAY. Is that the way for your worship to talk? You have got me into a bad mess; you offered me your help, you took my money. What can one expect from such an awkward man, who spends his life in solitude, who has banished himself from human society? Hell devil! in vain I have made the journey; the game is up.

ORMI. I regret it very much, honored sir; but if anything has happened, it is because fortune does not smile on you and does not favor your wish to secure a rich bride. I will ask for her for you myself.

BALKAY. Hear, father! here comes the old woman scolding as hard as she can. If I could only hide myself somewhere till the first heat of her anger is over. Do not say that I am losing courage.

LORÁNYINÉ, ADÉLE, MARTHA, and LOUIS come.

LORÁNYINÉ. Well, my fine gentleman, I am glad to see you at last with your own bristles on your head. At first

truly I could not believe it, but now I say that this persecution of innocence is a—to heaven—crying wickedness.

BALKAY. I trust, madam, that you will consider this as a joke, and consistent with the respect due to your ladyship. My aim excuses my action, and I am sure the young lady will excuse what was done for the love of her beautiful eyes.

ADÉLE. As for me, I am not at all displeased ; we so seldom have any amusement here.

LORÁNYINÉ. Oh, this degenerate world ! to creep after the girls in that dress, in this holy place, when you might have come openly and been introduced with suitable ceremony, and proposed to me for the young lady like any other honorable man. But, no ; you prefer sneaking into the house like a weasel, sighing secretly, scribbling letters, and deceiving the head of the house.

ORMI. Excuse me, but I must give vent to my feelings : I am charmed with your ladyship's wise words.

LORÁNYINÉ. Indeed ! You are only a silly monk, and doubtless just as deceitful as he is.

ORMI. I, at least, behave like a gentleman.

BALKAY. You can say what you please.

ORMI. To speak in defence of virtue is a holy duty, is it not, my gracious lady ?

LORÁNYINÉ. Read the young gentleman a good lecture.

ORMI. With my whole heart. Hear, my young gentleman ! People of your way of thinking run straight into hell-fire. Virtue's first obligation—virtue—the—the——

LAJOS. Pray excuse me ; while the good hermit is speaking about virtue his actions tell a different tale. Is it not true that his actions should be like his words. Now take a good look at him. Sandor Ormi is hidden under the hermit.

ORMI. The rascal ! I shall drop dead.

LAJOS. But it is in vain. Please to take off that child's dress and stop talking about virtue. As for me, I do not care to be made chief forester.

BALKAY. So this pious—— [*He pulls the monk's gown off of Ormi.*] Verily, it is Ormi ! What frightful deceit ! it calls for vengeance.

ORMI. [*To LAJOS.*] I shall pay you for your treachery, you rascal !

LORÁNYINÉ. Oh, twice degenerate world!

MARTHA. Did not I say so? Under this garb something is concealed. Oh! I have eyes, I have eyes. Nothing can be concealed from me.

ORMI. [*Throws away his gown.*] There is no use denying it. I was also fascinated by the beautiful young lady. Your ladyship has caused my deceit by shutting your niece up as if she were a witch.

BALKAY. Yes, madam, if you were not so eccentric there would have been no necessity for our disguise.

LORÁNYINÉ. And if I should now admit you into my house, do you think you should succeed?

BALKAY. Why not? I think it would not be hard to beat this vile monk, who betrayed my confidence so shamefully. We will speak again on that subject.

ORMI. My dear friend, that can happen to any of us,—first to me and then to you. There was a wonderful sympathy between us, both in thought and action; but only wait a little, and I shall settle this young man's business.

LAJOS. I only did my duty.

LORÁNYINÉ. You did exactly right, Lajos; I am pleased with you. [*She holds her hand out to him.*] You can kiss my hand; I remain your gracious mistress.

LAJOS. What I did does not deserve thanks, but I can no longer keep it a secret that, though only a poor huntsman, I love Miss Adèle.

LORÁNYINÉ. What! you impudent creature! you dare to love a young lady, and that young lady one with the blood of the Lorányi in her veins! Frightful idea! A miserable hireling, a peasant, whose only recommendation is deceit, wildness, roughness, loves *this* young lady! The world must indeed be turned upside down for such a thing to happen.

ADÉLE. Dear aunt!

LORÁNYINÉ. What! you sit here so quietly and do not dig out his eyes?

ADÉLE. Oh, dear aunt, it would be such a pity to dig out those lovely eyes!

LAJOS. I do not know what kind of eyes I have, but in order that death may close them I shall go now and hang myself. [*He goes.*]

LORÁNYINÉ. Let him go at once! Take the stick to him,

Adèle! There you sit; are you not trembling with fury? are you not burning with rage?

ADÈLE. Not at all; but what did he tell it for? It was enough for me to know that he loves me, without his letting the whole world know it.

LORÁNYINÉ. Very well. Good heavens! If you had not encouraged him we should never have heard this disgraceful avowal. You unworthy offshoot from my blood! No; that I can never forgive. Out of my sight! Unheard-of fault; go, go! [ADÈLE *aside, crying.*]

BALKAY. If that is the case I am not surprised that we came too late, and confess that it causes me very little sorrow. Verily, a little pride along with the money would not have hurt. Ha, ha, ha!

ORMI. Verily, the greater the innocence the blacker the smoke.

LORÁNYINÉ. Both of you begone out of my sight! Wherefore would you put *me* to shame? Such tortures only a heart as strong as mine can bear.

MARTHA. So it is. I always said that Lajos was not so proud for nothing. When I speak to him he never gives me any answer. I regret that this has happened, but I am glad that I was true prophet.

FÜLÖP. [*Outside.*] In the spring, you wicked fellow!

FÉRUS. [*Outside.*] Just you wait a little!

FÜLÖP. I am looking for my master; why do you stop me?

FÉRUS. And I am smelling round for my master; why don't you let me go?

ORMI. My servant! Ha, ha, ha! they have caught each other. Let each other go at once. What do you want, rascals?

BALKAY. Férus! How dare you make such a noise?

FÉRUS. He came there on the hill, and wanted to drive me away.

FÜLÖP. He wanted to order me round, as if he were the Queen of May.

ORMI. Make friends! [*To LORÁNYINÉ.*] As this racket was occasioned by the faithfulness of our servants, I trust your ladyship will excuse it.

MARTHA. Yonder seems to move the form of a young gentleman, and that is a sight that has not been seen here for

the last four years. But as long as I have served in this house I have not heard such an uproar as your servants made.

LORÁNYINÉ. I have not a word to say, as this day parts us forever. If any one calls, say I am not at home.

LAJOS comes elegantly dressed.

LAJOS. Gracious lady!

LORÁNYINÉ. Who? what? La—La—.

ORMI. Upon my soul, the huntsman!

LAJOS. Allow me to call you dear aunt. I am Lajos Zodany, and arranged it so as to come sooner than I was expected, so as to get acquainted with my dear bride. You seem to doubt my word.

LORÁNYINÉ. I, sir!

ADÉLE. [*Runs into his arms.*] Lajos! Lajos! thou deceitful, naughty bridegroom, art thou not deceiving me again? Dost thou see, thou naughty man, how I have cried? and heaven knows I would not have cried if I had known how it was. But now it is all right: thou art here.

LAJOS. And I shall never leave thee again. My gracious lady, here is a letter from my father which, I think, will settle all your misgivings. To-morrow he will come himself to witness my happiness.

LORÁNYINÉ. [*Reads the letter hastily.*] It is really from the honored gentleman, and it was not suitable for the son of such a gentleman to put on a servant's dress, *even* for the purpose of acting as a spy on his betrothed!

LAJOS. One of my ancestors did the same, and to his writings I appeal for my justification. I am happy to say that if I cannot claim credit for originality, the investigation has been even more satisfactory than that, in our own family, was a hundred years since.

LORÁNYINÉ. I congratulate you! Adéle, *now* it is quite another thing for you to love Lajos. Now it is your duty to love him.

ADÉLE. Now, truly, you cannot reproach me for my bad taste.

LORÁNYINÉ. But I did not suspect it. And yet—I always said he looked as if he had good blood in him; did I not, Martha?

MARTHA. So it is; we always loved him.

LORÁNYINÉ. Such a distinguished-looking, high forehead! and a hundred ancestors seemed to be looking out of his eyes. Is it not true, Adèle? you also love ancestors?

ADÉLE. Not at all, dear aunt; fiery eyes and an agreeable manner are worth more to me than the past.

LAJOS. Now as I exerted myself in vain for these gentlemen, I will return this purse to Mr. Ormi.

ORMI. And I give it back to Mr. Balkay, from whom I received it.

BALKAY. And I present it to the servants. They can divide it, but without fighting.

FÜLÖP. Come, comrade! [*They embrace.*]

LORÁNYINÉ. Now I shall be truly happy to see both gentlemen at my house, but they must give up their hermit's tastes and try to be like other people.

ORMI. As we two are companions in misfortune, let us shake hands. As hermits we came, but now we will make merry at the wedding, and drown our sorrows in good wine.

MARTHA. All lovers! Three at once! Happy girl! Ah!

IV.

SALARDO.

BY SIGNOR GIO. FRANCESCO STRAPARALA DE
CARARAGGIO.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN

BY MRS. FRANCES C. HENDERSON.

SALARDO, the son of Rainaldo Scaglia, leaves Genoa and goes to Monserrato, where he acts against three commandments contained in his father's will, and is condemned to death. He is liberated, and returns to his own country.

A MAN should carefully weigh everything he does or intends to do. Thrice blessed is the son who reverences his father and is obedient unto him, for thus he obeys the commandment of the eternal God, and he shall live long on the earth, and succeed in all that he does. But he who is disobedient may well be considered unfortunate, and all his undertakings are likely to be unsuccessful.

In the ancient city of Genoa there was once upon a time a nobleman named Rainaldo Scaglia, a man who was as rich in mental gifts as in those of fortune. He, being rich and learned, had an only son named Salardo, whom he loved beyond everything else, and whom he taught and educated as a good father should do, never allowing him to want for anything which could be useful to him, or which could tend to his honor and glory. Now it happened that Rainaldo, being already old, fell dangerously ill. Feeling his end draw near, he sent for a notary and made his will, in which he instituted

Salardo his universal heir; but he begged him, as a good father, to remember three things, and never depart from them. The first was that he should never, no matter how great the love might be he bore his wife, intrust a secret to her. The second, that he should never adopt a strange child as his own and leave him heir to his fortune. The third was, that he should never serve under any lord who knew no law but his own will. Having said these things, he gave him his blessing, and, turning his face to the wall, he died after the space of a quarter of an hour.

Rainaldo being dead, and Salardo remaining sole heir of his possessions, and seeing that he was young, rich, and of high birth, instead of thinking of the soul of his old father, and of the multitude of duties which devolved upon him as the possessor of the paternal estates, he determined to marry, and to select such a wife, and of such descent, as should satisfy him. Before the close of a year from the death of his father Salardo had married Theodora, daughter of M. Odescalco Doria, a Genoese nobleman, one of the first in the city; and because she was beautiful and virtuous—although a little proud—her husband Salardo was so devoted to her that he stirred from her side neither by night nor by day. After they had been married several years, as they had no children, Salardo, with the consent of his wife, but contrary to his father's dying injunctions, determined to adopt one, and to treat him in all respects like his own son, and to leave him at last heir to all his possessions. He carried out his plan at once, and adopted the child of a poor widow. His name was Posthumus, and he was brought up by them more delicately than he should have been. After some length of time Salardo concluded to leave Genoa; not but what the city was beautiful and honorable, but moved by that restlessness which often attacks those who are responsible to no one for their actions. Taking, therefore, a quantity of money and jewels, and calling into requisition all the carriages and horses, he went with Theodora, his beloved wife, and Posthumus, his adopted son, from Genoa to Monserrato, on the way to Piedmont. Having settled there, he cultivated the acquaintance first of one citizen, then of another, going hunting with them, and enjoying with them all the pleasures of which he was fond. And his magnificence towards each one of them was so great

that he was not only loved, but honored by them all. Reports of his great liberality had reached the ears of the marquis of Monserrato, and seeing that he was young, rich, noble, wise, and suitable for every undertaking, he took him into high favor, and could not do without him a single day. And so great was the friendship which united Salardo and the marquis, that every one who wished to obtain any favor from the latter was obliged to address himself to Salardo if he wished to secure it. Salardo, seeing himself in such high favor, used every exertion to please the marquis in all things which he thought might be agreeable to him.

The marquis, who was also young, was very fond of flying the falcon, and had in his possession many birds, and setters, and other animals, as is suitable for a grand nobleman, but he would not have gone once to hunt or to fly the falcon without Salardo. Now it happened once, when Salardo was alone in his room, that he thought within himself of the great honor the marquis did him, and passing in review in his mind the polite manners, the pretty ways, and the ready obedience of his son Posthumus, he said to himself, "How much my father was mistaken! Surely his mind, like that of most old men, must have been on the wane. I cannot think what folly, what frenzy, could have induced him expressly to command me not to bring up a son who was not my own, nor to enter the service of any lord governing according to his own pleasure. I see now how opposed to truth were his precepts, because Posthumus is not mine own son, and yet he is good, wise, polite, moral, and most obedient to me. And would it be possible for any one to bestow more honor and caresses upon me than the marquis? and yet he governs solely according to his own will. His love for me is so great, and he does me so much honor, that one could almost fancy I were his superior and he were afraid of me. At this I marvel so that I know not what to say. There are certainly silly old men who, forgetting what they did in their own youth, wish to give laws and orders to their children, laying on them burdens which they would not touch with the tips of their fingers. And this they do not from any love they bear them, but simply that they may be worried and tormented. Now that I have succeeded beyond my hopes in relieving myself of two of the burdens laid on me by my

father, I mean to try my luck now with the third, and feel sure that my dear, sweet wife will only bless me the more with her warm and well-founded love ; and she, whom I love more than the light of my eyes, will see how great is the simplicity, nay, the folly, of miserable old age, which is only happy when loading its last will with unbearable conditions. Whom could I trust more securely than mine own wife, who left for me her mother, and brothers and sisters, and her own home, and has become with me one heart and one mind ? Thus I feel sure that I could confide to her even the most important secrets. I mean, therefore, to test her fidelity, —not that I doubt it myself, as I am sure that she loves me better than herself, but I will try her solely as an example to those silly youths who think it is an unpardonable sin to act contrary to the crazy injunctions of their old fathers." Thinking thus of his father's last wishes, Salardo fully determined to disregard the third, as he had done the other two.

Without losing a moment he left his room and went downstairs and direct to the palace. There he went into a room where there were many falcons, and without being seen by any one he took the one the marquis loved best, and carrying it off, intrusted it to a friend named Fransae. He begged him to take charge of it till he heard from him again ; and going home, he took one of his own falcons, and without being seen of any one killed it and carried it to his wife, saying,—

"Theodora, my beloved wife, I (as you know yourself) can no longer have one moment's rest. Our marquis is always either hunting, or flying his falcon, or fencing, or doing something else where he considers my presence indispensable, so that I often do not know whether I be dead or alive. But to cool his ardor for sports I have played him a trick which he will not like, and perhaps for a few days he will leave me in peace."

"What can you have done ?" replied his wife.

"Why," said Salardo, "I have killed his best falcon, and his pet, and I think when he does not find it he will nearly die of rage."

And taking the dead falcon out of his handkerchief he gave it to his wife, telling her to have it cooked for supper, when they would eat it for love to the marquis.

The wife, hearing her husband's words and seeing the dead falcon, was much grieved, and began to reprove her husband for his deed, saying,—

"I do not see how you had the heart to do so great an injury to the marquis, who loves you so tenderly. He tries to please you in everything, and after him you hold the first place. Oh! my dear Salardo, you have certainly brought ruin on yourself. If the marquis were to hear of it you would probably even lose your life."

"But," said Salardo, "how should he hear it? You and I are the only persons who know anything about it. But I beg you for the love you bear me not to betray my secret to any one; if you did you would cause my ruin and your own."

"Rest assured," said the wife, "that I would die rather than betray such a secret."

The falcon being well cooked and seasoned, Salardo and Theodora sat down to table, and as Theodora would not eat of the falcon nor listen to her husband's loving entreaties that she should, he raised his hand and gave her such a box on the ear that her whole right cheek was scarlet. She began to cry and to complain of his beating her, and left the room muttering that he should remember this, and that she would soon find a suitable opportunity for revenging herself. The next morning she arose very early, and going without delay to the marquis, related the death of the falcon. The marquis flew into such a passion that he ordered Salardo to be seized instantly, and (without hearing any justification he might have to give) decreed that he should be hung at once by the neck and that his possessions should be divided into three parts, one of which should be given to his wife, one to his son, and one to the man who should hang him.

Posthumus, who was a handsome, well-made young man, when he had heard of the sentence passed on his father and the division of his possessions, ran home to his mother, and said,—

"Oh, mother, would it not be better that I should hang my father, and thus secure the third of his estates, rather than it should fall into the hands of a stranger?"

"Thou hast well spoken, my son," replied the mother; "because by so doing the whole estate will remain together as heretofore."

Without loss of time Posthumus went to the marquis, and asked to be allowed to hang his father, so as to secure the third of his possessions promised to the hangman. The marquis was graciously pleased to grant Posthumus his request. Salardo had begged his faithful friend Fransae, to whom he had told his secret, to go to the marquis when they should be about to lead him to death, and to beg him to have Salardo brought before him and to hear if he had anything to say in his own defence. His friend did as he had been requested.

While Salardo was sitting alone in his dark prison, with his feet in irons, expecting hourly to be led forth to an ignominious death, he began to weep and to reason thus with himself: "Now I see and clearly comprehend how my good old father, by the light of his long experience, had cared for my welfare. He, as prudent and wise, gave me advice which I, as a headstrong young man, rejected. He ordered me to protect myself from my domestic enemies, and I gave myself into their hands that they might slay me and divide my spoils. He understood the nature of princes, who, in one and the same hour, love and abuse, who raise up and who put down, and he ordered me to keep away from them, but I sought them out, in order to lose through them my property, my honor, and my life. Would to God that I had never tried my faithless wife! Oh, Salardo, how much better thou wouldst have done if thou hadst followed in thy father's footsteps, and left to flatterers and parasites to pay court to princes! Now I see what has been the result of my overconfidence in myself, my wife, my rascally son, and, above all, in the ungrateful marquis! Now I see how much he loved me! How could he treat me worse than he is doing? Is he not taking from me my possessions, my honor, and my life? Oh, how soon his love has been changed to hate! Now I see the truth of the proverb, which says, 'A prince is like wine in a bottle: in the morning it is good, in the evening it is sour.' Oh, miserable Salardo! where is now thy nobility? where thy household walls? where thy great riches? where thy honesty, integrity, and loving nature? Oh, my father! I think that, although you are dead, you can now, in the mirror of eternal goodness, see me led forth to be hung for not having obeyed your wise and loving precepts. And I

feel sure that you love me still with the tenderness with which you did then love me, and that you pray to God to have compassion on my youthful errors and to forgive my disobedience to your commandments."

While Salardo was thus reasoning with himself his son Posthumus, like a well-trained executioner, went with the *sbirri* to the prison, and presenting himself arrogantly to his father, said,—

"My dear father, as your death is inevitable, I, knowing the great love you bear me, have thought that you would not take it amiss if I performed the office of hangman, as thus your possessions will not fall into the hands of strangers, but will remain in your family, which you will prefer."

Salardo, who had listened attentively to his son's words, said, "God bless you, my son! You have thought what is agreeable to me, and if before I was unhappy I shall now die content. Perform your office, my son, without delay."

Posthumus first begged his pardon and then kissed him on the mouth, and taking the halter put it round his neck, comforting him and exhorting him to suffer death patiently. Salardo, seeing the turn things had taken, was astonished and remained as one stupefied; but, having left the prison with his hands tied behind him and the halter round his neck, and accompanied by the hangman and *sbirri*, he went with a quick step towards the place of execution, and having arrived there he turned his back to the ladder placed by the gallows and went up backwards, step by step. Having arrived at the appointed height, he looked around him with a steadfast and unperturbed look, and addressing the assembled crowd, related to them in full the cause for which he was about to suffer, after which, with loving words, he exhorted the sons to be obedient to their old fathers, and asked forgiveness for any injury he might have done any one. When the people had heard the cause of Salardo's condemnation there was not one who did not burst into tears, and who did not desire the liberation of the unfortunate man.

While these things were taking place, Fransae went to the palace and addressed these words to the marquis: "Most illustrious lord, if ever a spark of pity were kindled in the heart of a just ruler I am sure of now fanning it into a flame in you, if, with your usual clemency, you will consider the

innocence of the friend already led forth to death for an unknown error. What cause, my lord, could induce you to condemn to death Salardo, whom you loved so tenderly? He has never offended you, nor even thought of doing so. But if you, most benign lord, will order your most faithful friend to be brought into your presence, it will not be difficult for him to prove his innocence."

The marquis, nearly suffocated with rage, wished to drive Fransae from his presence without vouchsafing him any answer, but he threw himself on the ground, and, weeping and embracing his knees, cried, "Mercy, just lord! mercy, clement lord! Do not cause the death of the innocent Salardo. Calm your anger and I will prove his innocence. Let it not be said of you, O lord, that you put your friends to death without any reason."

The marquis angrily replied, "I see you wish to keep Salardo company, and if you fan the flame of my anger a little more I will myself hang you up beside him."

Fransae replied, "I am content, my lord, that my long services should receive this reward, and that you should have me hung by Salardo's side, if he do not convince you of his innocence."

The marquis, considering Fransae's noble-mindedness, thought within himself that, unless he were very sure of Salardo's innocence, he would not agree to be hung by him, and therefore he said, "I am content; let the execution be suspended for an hour; but if he do not prove his innocence you shall both be hung."

Calling a servant, he ordered him to proceed at once to the place of execution, and to order the sbirri to suspend the execution, and to bring Salardo bound, with the halter round his neck and the hangman by his side, into his presence.

When Salardo came before him and saw his face inflamed by anger, with a proud aspect and dry eyes, and without the least perturbation, he thus addressed him: "My lord, my submission to you, and the love I bear you, did not deserve the shame you have heaped upon me, condemning me to a disgraceful death. And although your indignation at my folly (for folly it was) caused you, contrary to your nature, to turn so cruelly against me, still you ought not to have condemned me to death without hearing me. The falcon,

whose supposed death has irritated you so violently against me, lives and is as well as ever. Neither did I take him to kill him nor to offend you, but to experiment on a certain object, as I will now relate to you."

Calling Fransae, who was present, he begged him to return the falcon to his beloved master. He then related to him his father's loving commandments, and his own infraction of them.

The marquis, hearing Salardo's words, which proceeded from the bottom of his heart, and seeing his falcon even handsomer than before, was speechless. But having recovered himself, and considering his great error in condemning his innocent friend so thoughtlessly to death, with his eyes full of tears he said to Salardo, "Salardo, if your eyes could penetrate to the bottom of my heart, you would see that the rope which has bound your hands, and the halter which was round your neck, have not caused as much sorrow to you as to me. Neither do I expect ever to be happy again, since I have offended you who loved and served me so faithfully. If I could I would annul the past, but as that is not possible, I will try to make you such amends as will satisfy you."

With these words the marquis, with his own hands, took the halter from around Salardo's neck, and loosed his hands, and embracing him tenderly, and kissing him several times, made him sit beside him. But when the marquis wished to have the halter put round Posthumus's neck and to have him hung, Salardo would not agree to it, but calling him to him said, "Posthumus, brought up by me as a son, from your infancy to the present time, I do not know what to do with you now. On one side I am drawn by the love I have always borne you, and on the other by my indignation at your hard-heartedness. One asks me to pardon you, the other requires me to punish you. What can I do? If I forgive you, I shall be hooted at in the street. If I punish you, I shall be disobeying the divine injunction to do good to those who hate us. But in order that I may not be accused of too great leniency or too great cruelty, I shall take a middle path, and neither punish you corporally nor forgive you entirely. Take this halter which you had wound round my neck and keep it in exchange for my possessions which you

coveted so much, and as a remembrance of me and your grievous error, and go so far away that I may never hear of you again."

So saying he drove him from his face, and never heard of him again. Theodora, hearing that her husband had been liberated, fled and went to a convent, where she finished her life in sorrow and penitence. Salardo, having heard of the death of Theodora, begged the marquis to dismiss him, and leaving Monserrato returned to Genoa, living there a long time happily, devoting the greater part of his possessions to the service of God, and retaining for himself only what was absolutely necessary.

V.

THE SNOW-STORM.

BY A. G. PUSHKIN.

. TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN
BY MRS. FRANCES C. HENDERSON.

TOWARDS the close of the year 1811,—a memorable epoch for us,—the good Gabriel Gabrilovitch P—— lived on his estate Nenaradov. He was celebrated in the whole neighborhood for his hospitality. The neighbors were constantly coming in to eat and drink, and to play Boston at five kopecks a point with his wife, Prackovia Petrovna, and sometimes, in addition, to throw loving glances at their daughter, Maria Gabrilovna, a well-made, but pale seventeen-year-old damsel. She was reckoned a great match, and many coveted her for their sons.

Maria Gabrilovna had been brought up on the French plan, and was consequently very romantic. The object on which she had bestowed her affections was a poor ensign in the army, who was on leave of absence on his father's small estate. As a matter of course, the young man was consumed by the same flame; and it is also a matter of course that the young girl's parents, having noticed this mutual inclination, forbade their daughter's ever thinking of the young man, and treated him even worse than they would have done an assessor.

Our lovers corresponded, and also met each other daily, either in the piny wood or in the old chapel. There they exchanged vows of eternal love and formed many plans. What between conversing and corresponding they at last

came to the following conclusion : " As we cannot live without each other, and our hard-hearted parents oppose our happiness, we shall be obliged to do without their consent." One will readily imagine that the mind of the young man gave birth to this happy idea, and that it fired the romantic imagination of Maria Gabrilovna.

Winter came and often prevented their meeting, but their correspondence was so much the livelier. Vladimir Nickolaevitch begged her in every letter to give herself to him, and marry him secretly. After waiting a little while they would then throw themselves jointly at the feet of her parents, who, finally touched by the unhappiness and heroic affection of the lovers, would say, " Come into our arms."

Maria Gabrilovna hesitated long and rejected many plans, but at last consented to do as follows : On an appointed day she would not go down to supper, but would remain in her room under pretext of a headache. She had taken her maid into her confidence. They were to go down the garden-steps and through the garden, at the gate of which they would find a sleigh. In this this they were to drive straight to the church in the parish of Žardino, five wersts (kilomètres) from Nenaradov, where they would find Vladimir waiting for them.

On the eve of the appointed day Maria Gabrilovna did not close her eyes. After selecting and packing up clothes, she wrote two letters, one, the longest, to a sympathizing baroness, her bosom friend, the other to her parents. She told them, in touching words, that the insupportable violence of her passion had induced her to take this step, and that the happiest moment of her life would be that in which she would be allowed to throw herself at their feet and to sue for pardon. Having sealed these letters with a seal, on which were engraved two burning hearts, with a suitable motto, she threw herself on her bed just as day began to dawn and fell into an uneasy slumber. She dreamt that just as she was taking her seat in the sleigh which was to convey her to the church her father seized her, and, dragging her with frightful rapidity through the snow, threw her into a dark and bottomless pit. Down that she flew headlong with an inexplicable chilling of the heart, while she saw Vladimir lying on the grass, pale and bleeding. He, dying, begged her with a piercing

voice to hurry and wed him. At last she arose paler than usual, and with a most genuine headache. Her father and mother noticed it with anxiety, and their tender care and their repeated inquiries, "How are you, Masha? I hope you are not ill, Masha?" rent her heart. She tried to seem more cheerful, to reassure them, but she could not. Evening came. The thought that this was the last day she would spend with her family wrung her heart. She was scarcely alive; she secretly took leave of all the persons, and of all the objects even which surrounded her. Supper was announced: she trembled. With a quivering voice she said she could not eat, and said good-night to her father and mother. They kissed her as usual and blessed her; she could scarcely restrain her tears. When she reached her room she fell on her knees and wept bitterly. The maid tried to comfort and encourage her. Everything was ready. Within half an hour Masha was to leave forever the home of her childhood, her room, her quiet, maidenly life. Out-of-doors was a snow-storm; the wind howled, and the snow fell in thick flakes, and Masha (Molly) considered it as a bad omen. Soon everything in the house became quiet. Masha wrapped herself in her shawl, drew on her warm kapot, and, taking her bag on her arm, she went down the garden-steps. The maid followed with two cakes. They went with difficulty through the garden,—the wind was blowing with such violence that it seemed to wish to annihilate the young criminal, and it was with difficulty that they reached the garden-gate. Outside, the sleigh was waiting for them. The horses, who were nearly frozen, would not stand still. Vladimir's coachman was holding them fearlessly by the bit. He helped the noble young lady and her maid into the sleigh, placed the bag and the cakes, took the reins, and the horses went off like lightning. We will now leave the *barishna* (noble young lady) and her maid to the care of their skilful driver and turn to our young lover.

Vladimir had been busy the whole day. Early he had been to see the priest at Zardin, and had some difficulty in talking him over. Then he had to seek three witnesses among neighboring noblemen. The first to whom he applied, the retired forty-year-old Cornet Dravin, consented with pleasure. This proposal, he said, reminded him of the time he served in the Hussars, and of the tricks they used to play. He per-

suaded Vladimir to stay and dine with him, and assured him there would be no difficulty in getting two other witnesses. In fact, soon after dinner appeared the surveyor Smith, in whiskers and spurs, and the son of the mayor, a youth of sixteen, who had just entered the Lancers. They not only acceded to Vladimir's request, but assured him of their readiness to sacrifice their lives for him. Vladimir embraced them with transport, and went home to make his preparations.

It already began to grow dark. He sent his confidential servant Tereshky to Nenaradov with his three-horse sleigh and positive and detailed instructions, and ordered for himself a little sleigh with one horse, and alone, without any coachman, he started for Zardin, where Maria Gabrilovna ought to arrive in about two hours.

But scarcely had Vladimir begun his journey when such a storm of wind and snow arose that he could not see anything. In one minute all traces of the road were effaced. Nothing was to be seen but a thick yellow fog, dotted with flakes of snow; the sky and earth seemed to join. Vladimir, who had attempted to take a short-cut across the field, wished to return to the road. The horses stepped at hap-hazard and occasionally mounted a snow-drift, through which they had to work their way, overturning the sleigh in their plunges. Vladimir tried not to lose his way. It seemed to him that he had already travelled more than half an hour and still there was no sign of the wood of Zardin. He drove ten minutes farther; still no sign of the wood. He then crossed a field intersected by deep ditches. The storm had not abated at all, neither had the sky become clearer. The horse showed signs of fatigue, and could only go in a walk, as it was occasionally up to the girths in the snow.

Finally Vladimir became convinced that he was not going in the right direction; he began to reflect and thought he remembered that he ought to have turned to the right. He drove to the right. The horse was nearly exhausted. They had already been more than an hour on the road; Zardin could not be far. On they went and went, and still saw no signs of it. Every few minutes the sleigh was overturned as they were constantly crossing snow-drifts and ravines. Time sped; Vladimir was growing very uneasy.

Finally they saw something blackish on one side. Vladimir turned the horse's head in that direction. As they drew near they saw a wood. "Thank heaven!" said he, "now we are near." He drove round the wood, hoping to fall at last into the well-known road, or at least to get to the side of the wood on which lay Zardin. Soon they found a road, and drove along dark trees stripped by the winter. The wind lulled a little, the road became smoother, the horse revived a little, and Vladimir became easier in his mind.

Still on they travelled and the wood did not come to an end. Vladimir saw with horror that he was in an unknown forest. Despair seized him. He took the whip to his horse; the poor creature broke into a trot, but gave out in a quarter of an hour and relapsed into his slow gait, spite of the unfortunate Vladimir's blows.

The trees gradually grew thinner, and Vladimir finally got out of the wood. Zardin was not in sight. He thought it must be about midnight. Tears burst from his eyes and he drove at a venture. The weather improved, the clouds scattered, and the night became tolerably clear. Before him lay a plain covered with white ridges, and not far off he saw a village composed of four or five houses. Vladimir drove to it. At the first hut he jumped out of his sleigh, ran to the window and knocked. At the end of a few minutes a wooden shutter was pushed open and an old man poked out his white beard.

"What do you want?"

"Is it far to Zardin?"

"If it is far to Zardin?"

"Yes, yes; is it far?"

"Not far; it must be about ten versts" (kilomètres).

At this answer Vladimir pulled his hair, but remained motionless, like one condemned to death.

"And where are you from?" asked the old man.

Vladimir did not have the heart to answer his question, but said, "Could you, old man, give me a horse to Zardin?"

"Just as if we had horses!" replied the man.

"Could you not, then, give me a guide? I will pay whatever he asks."

"Wait," said the old man; "I will send you my son; he will accompany you."

Vladimir waited about a minute and then began to knock again. The shutter was opened, the beard stuck out.

"What do you want?"

"Where is your son?"

"He will come in a minute; he is dressing. If you are cold, go into the cellar."

"Thank you; send your son quickly."

The beard disappeared, and a lad came out with a cudg and walked on ahead, now showing the road, now finding again where it was hidden by the snow-drifts.

"What o'clock?" asked Vladimir.

"It will soon be day," replied the youth.

Vladimir did not say a word.

The cocks were crowing and it was broad day when the coach reached Zardin. The church was closed. Vladimir paid his guide and drove to the parsonage. His three-horse sleigh was not in the yard. What tidings were awaiting him?

Now we must return to our good Nenaradov squire and see what has happened there.

Nothing.

The old people had left their bedroom and gone into the sitting-room,—Gabriel Gabrilovitch in his nightcap and flannel-trimmed jacket, Prackovia Petrovna in her wadded dressing-gown. The samovar was brought in, and Gabriel Gabrilovitch sent a maid up to ask Maria Gabrilovna how she felt and how she had slept. The maid returned with the answer that the barishna had slept very badly, but that she felt better now, and would soon come to the sitting-room. In fact the door opened and Maria Gabrilovna came forward to wish a good-morning to her papa and mamma.

"How is your head, Masha?" asked Gabriel Gabrilovitch.

"Better, papa," she replied.

"Yesterday evening you looked feverish," said Prackovia Petrovna.

"That is possible, dear mamma," answered Masha.

The day passed comfortably, but in the night Masha was taken ill. They sent to town for a doctor. He came in the evening and found the patient on the brink of the grave. She had a very hot fever, and was for two weeks at the point of death.

No one in the house knew anything of the nightly escape. The letters written on the eve had been destroyed.

even in delirium she did not allude to it. The priest, the retired cornet, the surveyor, and the young lancer were all prudent, and held their peace. The coachman, Tereshka, never blabbed, so that the transaction was never divulged, which was wonderful, as there were half a dozen confidants. But Maria Gabrilovna herself, in her constant delirium, betrayed *her* secret to the watchful mother, who never left her bedside for a moment. It is true, even in delirium, she never so much as alluded to the marriage topic, but her mother gathered from what she did say that she was desperately in love with Vladimir Nikolaevitch, and that this love was the sole cause of her illness. She consulted with her husband and with some of her neighbors, and all with one accord declared that it was evidently Maria Gabrilovna's destiny, and that it is impossible to escape from one's destiny; that poverty is not a crime; that one does not live with the money but with the man, and similar sayings. Moral reflections and sayings are generally found very useful in similar cases, when we cannot of ourselves find any excuse.

In the mean time the barishna began to recover. For a long time Vladimir had not come near the house. He had been frightened by his habitual reception. The parents determined to send for him and tell him that they consented to the match. What was the surprise of the family at Nenaradov when for answer they received a letter written evidently under the influence of partial derangement! Vladimir assured them he would never set his foot in their house, and begged their pardon for having been the cause of their losing their only darling by an untimely death. In a few days they heard that Vladimir had returned to the army. This was in the year A.D. 1812.

It was long before they dared communicate this intelligence to the convalescent Masha. She never mentioned Vladimir. A few months later his name stood in the list of those who had distinguished themselves and been severely wounded at Borodino. On seeing it she fainted, and it was feared that her fever might return, but, thank heaven, no serious consequences followed the faint.

She was struck by a second misfortune: Gabriel Gabrilovitch died, leaving her heiress of all his property. But the inheritance did not seem to give her any pleasure, and she

caused deep sorrow to the poor Prackovia Petrovna by swearing never to leave her. Together they left Nenaradov, such sad memories were associated with it, and went to live on an estate at —.

Suitors for her hand were not wanting, as she was known to be rich and amiable, but she never gave any of them the least encouragement. Her mother often urged her to make a choice, but Maria Gabrilovna shook her head and fell into reverie. Vladimir no longer lived; he had died on the eve of the entrance of the French troops into Moscow. His memory seemed to be sacred to Masha, at least she carefully treasured everything that reminded her of him, the book that he had read aloud to her, the drawings, the music, and the poetry he had written for her. The neighbors, who knew all this, wondered at her constancy, and were anxiously expecting the hero who was to overcome the steadfastness of this second Artémise.

In the mean time the war had ended gloriously. Our regiments returned to their own country. Crowds ran to meet them. The music played the warlike tune "Vive Hen Quatre," Tyrolese waltzes, and airs from *Joconda*. The officers were mostly decorated with orders, the soldiers were converging gayly with each other, mixing continually French and German words with those of their own tongue. Never to be forgotten epoch! epoch of glory and ecstasy! Oh, how quickly the Russian's heart beats when it hears the word "fatherland"! How sweet were the tears shed on seeing their loved ones again!

The women, the Russian women, were then unequalled. Their usual calmness forsook them, and they were really drunk with enthusiasm, as they shouted hurrah when they met the returning warriors. Which of the officers of the time will deny that it is to the Russian women that he was indebted for the best, the most precious reward?

At this brilliant time Maria Gabrilovna lived with her mother in — government, and did not see how the two capitals fêted the returning army. In the provinces and the villages the rejoicings were, if possible, still greater. The appearance of an officer in these places was a veritable triumph, and in their presence lovers in frock-coats were scarcely noticed.

We have already stated that, spite of her coldness, Mar

Gabrilovna was constantly surrounded by a crowd of suitors. All had to retire when she received into her castle the wounded Colonel Byrmin, with the Georgian cross on his breast, and with an interesting paleness which pleaded powerfully for him with the barishna. He was about twenty-six years old. He came to reside on his estate, which lay in the neighborhood. Maria Gabrilovna received him very graciously, and so it may be supposed that she coquetted with him, and a poet noticing her manner might have said,—

“Se amor non e, che dunque?”

Byrmin was really a charming young man, and was quite as clever as a marrying man need be. He was refined and observing, and without any evil habits or inclinations. His deportment towards Maria Gabrilovna was frank and open, but whatever she did or said his soul and his looks followed her. He seemed to be of a retired and modest disposition, but report said that he had at one time been frightfully thoughtless and hare-brained. That did not injure him in the opinion of Maria Gabrilovna, who, like most young ladies, willingly excused practical jokes betraying daring and strength of character.

But far more (more than his attentions, more than his interesting paleness, more than his bandaged arm) did the silence of the young hussar excite her interest and observation. She could not help seeing that he admired her, and one of his observing disposition could surely see that he was not indifferent to her. How, then, did it happen that she had not yet seen him at her feet? For what was he waiting? Was it the timidity inseparable from real love that held him back, or pride, or a cunning coquetry? It was an enigma to her. Having reflected well, she determined to show him greater tenderness and attention, as she thought it must be timidity which prevented his declaring himself. She prepared herself for a sudden burst of passion, and waited impatiently for a romantic declaration. A secret, of whatever nature it may be, is always burdensome to the female heart. Her warlike tactics were crowned with success,—at least Byrmin became so pensive and his black eyes shot such fiery glances at Maria Gabrilovna that it seemed as if the de-

cisive moment must be at hand. The neighbors talked of a wedding as of a settled affair, and the good Prackovia Petrovna rejoiced that her daughter had at last selected a suitable mate.

The old lady was sitting one day alone in the guest-chamber, laying the corners of a "patience," when Byrmin entered the room, and immediately asked for Maria Gabrilovna.

"She is in the garden," said the old lady. "Go to her, and I will wait for you here."

Byrmin went, and the old lady crossed herself and thought this business will finally come to an end.

Byrmin found Maria Gabrilovna sitting by the fountain under a willow-tree, with a book in her hand and in a white dress, just like the heroine of a novel. After the first inquiries Maria Gabrilovna purposely stopped conversing, so as to be able to pay undivided attention to the explanation which, she felt sure, he was about to give. Sure enough, Byrmin, feeling the difficulty of his situation, opened the subject by saying that he had long sought an opportunity to lay his heart bare before her, and that he now begged for the closest attention. Maria Gabrilovna closed her book and cast down her eyes in token of assent.

"I love you," said Byrmin. "I love you to distraction." (Maria Gabrilovna blushed and bent her head still lower.) "I have acted thoughtlessly in allowing myself to contract the pleasant habit of seeing you and hearing you daily." (Maria Gabrilovna thought of St. Preux's first epistle.) "Now it is too late for me to contend against my fate. Your incomparable image, the recollection of your loveliness, will pursue me everywhere and be the torment of my life; but I must perform the difficult duty of imparting to you my frightful secret, which places between us an insuperable obstacle."

"There already existed one," said Maria Gabrilovna, with vivacity. "I never could have been your wife."

"I know," replied he, sadly, "that you once loved, but death and three years of mourning—— Good, sweet Maria Gabrilovna, do not rob me of my sole consolation,—tho' I thought that you might have consented to make me happy if——"

"Hush; for heaven's sake, hush! you torture me!"

"Yes, I know, I feel that you would have been mine, but I,—unfortunate creature,—I am married!"

Maria Gabrilovna looked at him with astonishment.

"I am married," repeated Byrmin. "I have been married four years already, and I neither know who my wife is nor where she is."

"How you talk!" exclaimed Maria Gabrilovna. "How strange! But continue; I will relate afterwards. I entreat you, tell me all!"

"In the beginning of the year 1812," said Byrmin, "I was hurrying to Vilna, where our regiment was stationed. I arrived at our post-station quite late in the evening. I ordered them to unharness the horses as speedily as possible, as a frightful storm had arisen, and the inspector and the postilions advised me to wait. I followed their advice, but an inexplicable uneasiness seized me,—it seemed as if some one was calling me. The storm had not abated, but I could not rest, so I ordered the horses to be harnessed, and set off in spite of the storm. The postilions were afraid of driving into the river, which we had to follow for three versts. Soon they lost all trace of the road, and as the banks were steep they turned aside and at last came to an unknown region. The tempest was still raging, and seeing a light in the distance I told the postilion to drive to it. We came to a village. The village church was lit up. The church was open, and before it stood several sleighs. Several persons were standing in the porch. 'Here, here!' cried several voices. I ordered the postilion to drive thither. 'In the name of common sense,' said one, 'what is the cause of this delay? The bride has fainted, the pope does not know what to do. We were about to go home. Come in, quick!' I jumped silently out of the sleigh and went into the church, which was very badly lighted with only two or three candles. A young girl was sitting on a bench in a dark corner of the church, another was supporting her head. 'Glory be to God,' said she, 'that you have come at last! The barishna is nearly dead with anxiety.' The old priest came to me, and said, 'Is it your pleasure that we should begin?' 'Begin, begin, father,' said I, thoughtlessly. The young lady came forward; she did not seem to be ugly. Incomprehensible, unpardonable thoughtlessness! I stood beside

her during the ceremony. The priest hurried through it. Three gentlemen and the waiting-woman supported the bride, who completely absorbed their attention. We were made man and wife. 'Now, embrace,' said they to us. My wife turned her pale face towards me and I tried to kiss her; she screamed, 'It is not he! it is not he!' and fell without consciousness. The witnesses cast angry glances at me; I passed through them without any hindrance, jumped into my kибитка, and screamed, 'Drive on!'

"My God!" cried Maria Gabrilovna. "And you do not know what became of your poor wife?"

"No," replied Byrmin. "I do not know the name of the place where I was married; I do not know the name of the station to which we drove. At that time I so little understood the importance of the step I had taken that, on leaving the church, I went to sleep and slept till the next morning, when we were already at the third relay. The servant who was then with me died during the journey, so that I have no hope of ever being able to discover who was the victim of my heartless joke, which I now so bitterly deplore."

"My God!" said Maria Gabrilovna, clasping her hands; "was it really you, and you do not recognize me?"

Byrmin turned pale and threw himself at her feet.

VI.

FRIENDSHIP AT THE HARVEST-FEAST.

A FARCE IN THREE ACTS,

BY JAN PALARIK.

TRANSLATED FROM THE SLOVACK, A SLAVISH TONGUE,
SPOKEN IN UPPER HUNGARY, BUT ENTIRELY DIFFER-
ENT FROM HUNGARIAN,

BY MRS. FRANCES C. HENDERSON.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

COUNTESS ERZIKA HRABOVSKA.

ORIESKA, *a school-teacher.*

MILUSA, *his daughter, companion to the COUNTESS.*

BARON KOSTROVICKY, *the COUNTESS's guardian.*

LUDOVIT, *his son, a lieutenant.*

ROHON, *a civil engineer.*

CAPKOVA, *the COUNTESS's maid.*

SUCHAY, *the COUNTESS's steward.*

PISTA, *BARON KOSTROVICKY's hussar.*

THOMAS, } *young peasants.*

JANO, }

DORA, } *young peasant girls.*

KATE, }

FIRST FOOTMAN, } *at the castle.*

SECOND FOOTMAN, }

The SCENE is laid on the COUNTESS's estates.

FIRST ACT.

A room at the castle. To the left is a window, to the right a door. A piano stands against the wall, books are lying on the table.

FIRST SCENE.

MILUSA; afterwards ORIESKA.

MILUSA. [*Looking at a picture lying on the table.*] That was certainly a good idea of mine to paint the countess in

our national Slovaek costume. What a lovely harvest-girl she makes!

ORIESKA. [*Comes in softly through the door.*] Ha! my daughter alone and so thoughtful.

MILUSA. [*Without noticing her father.*] I could fall in love with such a reaper.

ORIESKA. [*Quite loud.*] Milusa!

MILUSA. Ha, my father! [*She kisses his hand.*] May you live a hundred years! You come to see me as seldom as if you lived ten miles from the castle.

ORIESKA. I do not wish to be importunate, dear daughter. If I came oftener your gracious lady might be displeased.

MILUSA. You are mistaken; Countess Erzika often inquires after you.

ORIESKA. All talk, my daughter. I sent in a petition about the school, and no one paid the least attention to it.

MILUSA. There were reasons for that, father. You know the young countess does nothing without the advice of her guardian, and that is as it should be. Yesterday evening the old Baron Kostrovicky (the guardian of the young countess) seemed very thoughtful. He began to read a letter from his son Lajos in Pest, in which he tells him that he is at last coming home on a visit, and that he is very anxious to see the young countess, with whom he had played as a child. The young lady took his hand and kissed it, but of *course* that was only respect for the tutor.

ORIESKA. We may perhaps look to have a new master in the castle. But this school, my child?

MILUSA. True! Well, the old baron is a very grand nobleman, and he knows that the gentry must keep up the schools. He was very glad that you had brought this matter to their notice.

ORIESKA. Very fine. He was, of course, glad *per se* that he should soon see his son.

MILUSA. And then when he saw that Erzika put his son's letter away so carefully, he said he was perfectly satisfied with me, and that he could not, even in Paris, have found a better companion for his pupil, and that we kept everything in such perfect order.

ORIESKA. So we must please the guardian also.

MILUSA. His face fairly shone with delight.

ORIESKA. Ah, my daughter ; there is not another girl like you in the whole country. But it is better to let our daughters be governesses and companions for our own nobility than to send them to Hamburg or London. It is a sad thing that our nobles keep themselves so secluded.

MILUSA. Our good masters do not deserve this reproach ; they are very affable.

ORIESKA. [*Joyfully.*] Then is the baron *per se* in favor of the school ?

MILUSA. At first he made some difficulty ; but the countess soon convinced him that she considered it her duty to keep up a good school on her property.

ORIESKA. All honor to her for that.

MILUSA. Then her guardian told her that if she kept up a school at all, she had better try to have one of a somewhat higher order than the others in the neighborhood.

ORIESKA. All honor be to him for that. Yes, there are still among our upper classes noble minds who seek the real welfare of those beneath them.

MILUSA. Yes, indeed, father ; and who wish us to feel our nationality as Slovacks. But now I must go in to the countess. [*She goes.*]

SECOND SCENE.

ORIESKA and CAPKOVA.

CAPKOVA. [*To ORIESKA, who has been singing a national ballad.*] Hollo ! worthy rector. Please to stop.

ORIESKA. Ha ! the lady's-maid.

CAPKOVA. Of course your daughter has been gossiping and telling you that the countess is about to marry the young Bařon Kostrovicky, and you have come to congratulate.

ORIESKA. Nonsense ! I have simply come to see my daughter. Why are you so cross when the countess is satisfied with her ?

CAPKOVA. I am not satisfied, Mr. Rector. Formerly I really acted as companion to the countess, and then she did not care a pin for French or German or any other outlandish tongues. But now it is some gibberish or other the whole day, unless they are playing lady's billiard.

ORIESKA. Heaven forbid!

CAPKOVA. The only change is when they play duets on the piano, and that so unmercifully that the strings snap.

ORIESKA. Ha, ha, ha!

CAPKOVA. And when the duets are over, as sure as I am a living woman, the horses are brought to the door, and out they go for a ride.

ORIESKA. Ha, ha, ha!

CAPKOVA. And what am I now but a poor, despised maid? Oh! if her blessed papa could only see the change which has come over his daughter he would turn over in his grave. He was a good master! I nursed him in his last illness; and when he said, "To think that I must leave my dearest treasure, my daughter, behind me," his eyes filled with tears, and I wept with him.

ORIESKA. That was right, my dear Miss Capkova.

CAPKOVA. He left it in his will that Erzika should never dismiss me, but keep me as a relic of both her parents. Yes, yes; so he did.

THIRD SCENE.

The COUNTESS, MILUSA, ORIESKA, *and* CAPKOVA.

The COUNTESS *and* MILUSA. Ha, ha, ha!

CAPKOVA. Of course, countess is always joking. Here is Miss Milusa's papa, who has come to congratulate.

COUNTESS. Mr. Orieska, your Milusa has already told me your business.

ORIESKA. And she has already told me how noble-minded you are. [*He kisses her hand.*]

COUNTESS. It is a great pleasure to me to be able to do some good, but for my good intentions you have your own daughter to thank. She has spoken so often and so beautifully about the importance of keeping up the Slovenish nationality.

MILUSA. Oh, countess! I have no merit at all. It is your own good heart, and father's arguments, which have done all. [*She wishes to kiss her hand.*]

COUNTESS. [*Preventing her.*] Not so, Milusa, and do not look so sad. I like to see you happy. I love you as if you were my own sister. [*She embraces her.*]

CAPKOVA. [*To ORIESKA.*] Don't you believe, Mr. Reetor, that it is the Slovenish which has done it; it is all along of that French.

COUNTRESS. [*To CAPKOVA.*] Ha, ha, ha! Eh bien, Madame de Capkova! Vous êtes plus ridicule que stupide, verstandez vous?

ORIESKA and MILUSA. Ha, ha, ha! [*They laugh.*]

CAPKOVA. [*To the COUNTRESS.*] Oh, ouj, ouj, ma chère Comtesse. I understand something, if I have not taken lessons. [*To MILUSA.*] Ouj, ouj, madmoaselka. [*To ORIESKA.*] Ouj, mosiurko, you need not laugh; it is not only the noble who are "gebildete Lajt." I can "parliruju" also, if I am a "gemajne bagage."

ORIESKA. [*Ironically.*] Very well said, but you do not understand everything.

COUNTRESS. Mr. Orieska, we have had enough of Capkova; but I wanted to ask you if you do not think we could sing some quartettes. I am expecting a guest, the young Baron Kostrovicky. He has a very fine voice, and I think we might get up some musieal "potpourris." Your Milusa has a fine contralto, I sing soprano, and you must have a good baritone.

ORIESKA. With the greatest pleasure, gracious countess.

MILUSA. [*To the COUNTRESS.*] Countess, will you allow me to give you my opinion candidly? You wish to receive the young baron as the friend of your childhood, but how do you know that he is now worthy of your friendship? Oh, I beseech you, do not grant him your confidence till you know him better. I do not like matches made up by the parents.

COUNTRESS. You may be right, my dear.

ORIESKA. [*To MILUSA.*] What have you done, my child? How you talk! The old baron will be so angry. He must know his own son.

CAPKOVA. Yes, the "madmoaselka" would like to break off the match. That is the thanks one gets when one takes a companion out of pity.

ORIESKA. Miss Capkova, my daughter means well.

CAPKOVA. But her guardian expects from the countess the obedience of a daughter. Has he not been a second father to her, and taken the greatest pains with her education?

MILUSA. [*Pointedly.*] I dare say he does want obedience when he proposes his son for a husband.

ORIESKA. My daughter, please not to impute any bad motives to the honorable guardian.

COUNTESS. Milusa is right; do not scold her. I honor and esteem my guardian, but I am not at all sure that I could love his son. I mean to remain perfectly free till I see how I like him.

CAPKOVA. So?

MILUSA. Thanks, thanks, dear Erzika. Then you will receive the young baron simply as you would any other visitor?

COUNTESS. I shall, and even observe the strictest etiquette with him. Oh, it will be so amusing, and if he seems a little wild I will give him little lectures.

ORIESKA. [*To the COUNTESS.*] And you still wish the musical "potpourris," gracious countess?

COUNTESS. I will reflect. What do you think, Milusa?

MILUSA. Oh, now I will take part in them with the greatest pleasure. Music is the most innocent amusement, and we will make our guest acquainted with our lovely Slovenish ballads.

COUNTESS. I am so glad, Milusa. [*To ORIESKA.*] Mr. Teacher, let us try our parts. [*She goes to the piano and takes up some music.*] Here we have songs, duets, trios.

FOURTH SCENE.

The foregoing and SUCHAY.

SUCHAY. [*Bowing to the COUNTESS.*] Gracious countess, it is my duty——

COUNTESS. [*Interrupts him.*] Steward, please to be as brief as possible. I have no time to spare.

SUCHAY. I have the honor to report that to-day is the close of the harvest on all your possessions, and therefore according to custom——

COUNTESS. [*Interrupts him impatiently.*] Enough! enough! Do you not see that I have no time to spare? Put it all down in writing. [*She turns away.*]

SUCHAY. Pardon me; but it is my duty to tell you that the peasants expect the usual harvest-supper.

COUNTESS. Harvest-supper?

SUCHAY. Yes; it is the custom to make a feast for the reapers.

COUNTESS. [*Impatiently.*] Feast! Supper! I never heard of such a thing.

ORIESKA. Let me explain the matter to you, gracious countess. The peasants are accustomed to a little supper after the harvest is over. Here you can see in Kollar's "Songster," such a festival is thus described: "One troupe of mowers and reapers select a young man and carry him on their shoulders. Another crowd of harvesters selects a young girl, whom they carry in triumph. Both the young man and young girl are decked with ribbons, and have wreaths of flowers on their heads. These are carried in a triumphal procession to the master's door. Here they sing a song (the words are given here) and appeal to the master's generosity, after which they dance and eat and drink."

COUNTESS. Well, I like to follow the old national custom. But why did not the reapers come to me directly?

SUCHAY. Ah, my lady, there is a hajduk at the park gate.

COUNTESS. They might have come to the castle.

SUCHAY. There is your grace's housekeeper, and even the lady's-maid [*he bows to CAPKOVA*] will not admit them.

COUNTESS. [*To CAPKOVA.*] Aj, aj, madame! how dare you take it upon yourself to refuse admittance to any one?

CAPKOVA. Oh, such common people would only retard the march of civilization with their harvest-feasts and their merry-making. If they must dance, let them dance in the road for your hajduk.

COUNTESS. The civilization of the masters ought only to increase the comfort and happiness of those who are under them.

CAPKOVA. [*Disdainfully.*] Oh, of course.

COUNTESS. May I ask what was the occupation of your high-born ancestors, Frau von Capkova?

CAPKOVA. That is more than I can stand.

ORIESKA. [*To CAPKOVA.*] Ha, ha! that is your weak point, Mrs. Capkova, as your father was the count's hajduk.

CAPKOVA. I shall die of mortification.

ORIESKA. Yes, Mrs. Capkova, it was only as a reward for faithful services that you were advanced to the dignity of

lady's-maid; but you need not for all that think yourself better than the others, for it is after all honesty which makes the man.

CAPKOVA. Of course; but for all that I shall try to prevent the harvest-feast from taking place. [*She goes.*]

COUNTESS. [*Ironically to her as she is leaving.*] So I must have the kind permission of my gracious servants. [*To SUCHAY.*] Steward, I wish the harvest-feast to be kept with suitable pomp, so that the harvesters can enjoy themselves fully. Send me a deputation from them. [*SUCHAY goes.*]

MILUSA. But apropos! It has just occurred to me that it might be well to put off the harvest-feast till after the arrival of our guest. Such a national festival must, through its novelty and originality, interest a young man more than the proposed concert.

COUNTESS. That is a bright idea, my little Milusa. Even our national ballads would not be so new to the young baron, as he has doubtless heard them in the theatre at Pest, as Cornelius Hollas and Lemiewsky have been fond of singing them.

MILUSA. Yes; but he has certainly never seen a harvest-feast, and the gayety of our people would be infectious.

COUNTESS. Excellent, excellent! So we abide by the harvest-feast!

FIFTH SCENE.

SUCHAY comes in with THOMAS, JANO, KATE, and DORA.

SUCHAY. [*Introduces the deputation.*] Here are some of our honest lads and lasses.

THOMAS. [*To the COUNTESS.*] Long life and riches to our lady! We are proud to see you!

JANO. [*Crosses himself.*] Praise be to God, who has helped us at this time to gather in the increase He has given us!

DORA. And when we go to the field, what shall we eat for supper? A roast kid shall be our supper!

KATE. Help us, help us, my lady, that we may have wine and cake with our meat!

[*All together.*] And then give us music! Music in the large room at the tavern, and after we have danced we will drink in praise of the harvest-feast!

COUNTESS. Well, my good people, you shall dance and drink to your heart's content, only you must wait a day or two.

THOMAS. [*Scratching his head.*] Oh, gracious lady! why cannot it be this evening?

COUNTESS. You must wait two days. I am expecting visitors, and should like them to see one of our national festivals.

JANO. In that case we are quite satisfied to wait, gracious lady!

COUNTESS. And then I want you to make some preparation: you must all wear our national colors, and you must have on your best clothes, and the girls must have beads and ornaments. The steward will give you whatever money you need.

THE PEASANTS. A long life to our gracious lady!

COUNTESS. Remember that I want the girl who is to lead to be of unblemished reputation. [*To ORIESKA.*] Mr. Orieska, you have taught all these girls their catechism, you ought to know them.

ORIESKA. I think—— The miller's daughter is a most excellent girl.

DORA. And do you mean to say I am not?

KATE. [*To ORIESKA.*] Did not I always answer well in the catechism lessons?

THOMAS. [*To ORIESKA.*] Please, the handsomest girl is Fabian's Lena. She just suits for that part.

DORA. [*To THOMAS.*] See if I do not pay you for that!

KATE. Just wait till we get outside!

ORIESKA. Now mind! There is to be no quarrelling about this.

MILUSA. [*To the COUNTESS.*] I have an idea. Let me act the part of the leader. It will be fun for me, and will prevent any hard feelings among the girls.

DORA and KATE. And would you be willing to lower yourself to us?

MILUSA. We each have our own sphere, but I certainly do not consider myself any better than you.

DORA. Where the heart is good all else is good.

KATE. How pleased all our people will be!

THOMAS. Since the world began there won't have been such a harvest-feast!

COUNTESS. I like your idea, Milusa.

ORIESKA. And if the gracious countess will allow me, I will practise the people in singing. We have beautiful harvest-songs. For instance, [*he opens a book*] "The harvest is over." Do you know it?

ALL THE PEASANTS. Yes, yes; try us.

[ORIESKA *sits down to the piano and plays a simple accompaniment, the peasants sing.*]

COUNTESS. That is a beautiful air.

ORIESKA. We have many others that are quite as fine, and my daughter knows them all. [*To the peasants.*] When you sing, follow my daughter.

COUNTESS. [*To the peasants.*] Now, my good people, you can go. [*To SUCHAY.*] And you, steward, will take care that there is plenty to eat and drink at the feast.

PEASANTS. Long life to our lady! [*They dance in going out, and the curtain falls.*]

SECOND ACT.

FIRST SCENE.

CAPKOVA; afterwards a FOOTMAN.

CAPKOVA. [*Is sitting by the table and sealing a letter.*] How much trouble such a school-director can give one! Just to think of his blurting it right out that my papa had been a hajduk! Wait, you vulgar Slovak! Your proud daughter is only a coquette! If she objects to the countess marrying the young baron, it can only be that she wants to catch him for herself! But I shall be on the lookout, and if I discover anything, won't I tell it to the guardian!

FOOTMAN. [*Coming.*] Mrs. Lady's-maid, please to announce that the horses are at the door and I am ready.

CAPKOVA. My dear Ferko, here is a little letter which I want you to take to Kostrovic, and give to the baron in his own hand. Here is something for your trouble, and as there is very important news in the letter the baron will undoubtedly also give you a few groschen for you to refresh yourself.

FOOTMAN. You may depend upon me. [*He goes.*]

CAPKOVA. I think I may count on the rector's daughter being dismissed in a hurry. What a pleasure it will be to bow her out of the door. [*She makes repeated bows towards the door.*]

SECOND SCENE.

COUNTESS and MILUSA enter, and later a FOOTMAN.

COUNTESS. Oh, Mrs. Lady's-maid, what deep bows!

MILUSA. Yes, you can be pleasant when you wish to be!

CAPKOVA. Oh, I am so glad that we are once more together. [*Aside.*] Fear my enmity for all that.

COUNTESS. [*Laughingly to MILUSA.*] Ha, ha, ha! Milusa! I shall enjoy seeing you play your naïve part at the harvest-feast. You will attract the men much more than all the rest of the show.

MILUSA. Oh, countess! please not to make fun of me; you know the baron will not look at me.

A FOOTMAN. [*Comes in with a letter in his hand and says to the COUNTESS.*] A messenger on horseback from Kostrovic has just brought this letter, and says it contains good news for our gracious lady.

COUNTESS. Then give it to me at once. [*She takes the letter.*] I must see what the good news is. [*The servant goes, and she reads.*] "I announce to you the speedy arrival of my son;" ha! [*She reads on silently.*]

MILUSA. Does the old baron write this about his son Ludovit?

COUNTESS. [*Reads aloud.*] "Yesterday he returned to me from the stranger's home; but his desire to know Erzika is even greater than was his wish to see me. As he will hear of no delay, I shall send him to you to dinner. Receive him graciously."

MILUSA. If we are very industrious can we not give our comedy to-day?

CAPKOVA. Will his "herr papa" accompany him?

COUNTESS. No, no! Send me the messenger who brought this letter. [*CAPKOVA departs.*] To tell you the truth, I am annoyed; I thought he would only come to supper. How shall we receive him, Milusa? Hear what my guardian says farther: "Excuse me, Erzika, if I cannot accompany my

son, though I hope to visit you to-morrow. I send with him a young engineer, who went to school with him, and who has accompanied him from Pest."

MILUSA. So we shall have two cavaliers.

COUNTESS. And perhaps the young engineer will attack Milusa's heart in due form ; ha, ha, ha !

THIRD SCENE.

The foregoing, CAPKOVA, and PISTA.

CAPKOVA. [*In the doorway to PISTA.*] Come in, Stephen ; don't be afraid.

PISTA. [*To the COUNTESS.*] What are your ladyship's commands ?

COUNTESS. Stephen, I am much pleased with the news this letter contains. My maid will give you a bottle of wine for your trouble. [*CAPKOVA goes to get it.*] And now, Stephen, tell me something about your young master. You know the proverb "handsome is who handsome does." Does he look like his picture ?

PISTA. I humbly kiss your hand, countess. But, please, I am not Stephen. I am the lieutenant's hussar Pista.

MILUSA. Ha, ha ! the hussar Pista ! So the young gentleman has christened you anew.

PISTA. Yes, indeed ; and in the whole house no one dare speak a word of German or of Slovack, only Hungarian. The old baron is very angry about it, and his old nurse even cried.

MILUSA. Ha, ha ! that is funny ; then I suppose your master calls himself Lajos instead of Ludovit ?

PISTA. Yes, indeed ; and he has given new names to the whole house.

CAPKOVA. [*Comes with the wine.*] Here, hussar, drink your wine.

COUNTESS. [*To MILUSA.*] We must think how we can give Lajos a lesson ; patriotism is the greatest of virtues. I have an idea. [*To PISTA.*] Listen, hussar Pista !

PISTA. *Tessek parancsolni.* [*Hungarian for "what are your commands?"*]

COUNTESS. You must do me a service ; I will reward you well.

PISTA. *Oigen szivesen* [very willingly]. Gracious lady, I will serve you gladly.

COUNTESS. Hear me, Pista! Your old baron writes to me that he will only come here the day after Lajos, but that to-day he will send a friend, a young engineer, with him. I do not know this gentleman; who will accompany them?

PISTA. So it is; the old baron has important business, and the young baron will drive himself and his friend over.

COUNTESS. Good! What about this engineer?

PISTA. He is young, but rather dry and tiresome. His name is Jan Rohon, and he seems to be a very good young man.

COUNTESS. Excellent! This all suits for my plan. We must necessarily see a good deal of two young gentlemen who are staying in the house.

MILUSA. I am afraid of them; they will think they must be very gallant.

COUNTESS. Of course! Cavaliers from Pest are always gallant.

MILUSA. I do not care about their attentions; I like our own national simplicity better. I cannot parry jests and banter.

CAPKOVA. [*To MILUSA.*] Of course, the *mam'selle* means to carry on her intrigues against the guardian's plans.

COUNTESS. [*To CAPKOVA.*] Hush, maid; I am displeased with you. I feel on this point just as Milusa does. Lajos does not know me and I do not know him, and if he only wishes to talk Hungarian my answers will be short.

MILUSA. Ah! countess, will you not excuse me from attendance? Indeed, I shall have enough to do to prepare for the harvest-feast.

COUNTESS. On the contrary, I mean to have my fun. [*to PISTA and CAPKOVA*] and you must promise not to betray me. [*To CAPKOVA.*] You must treat my companion as your countess, and I shall take the part of the queen of the harvest-feast, with my basket on my arm and a wreath on my head.

PISTA. I promise not to betray you.

COUNTESS. [*To CAPKOVA.*] And you, lady's-maid?

CAPKOVA. And why do you wish to make such a breach of etiquette and to make a fool of the young baron?

COUNTESS. You must obey me, Capkova, whether you approve of it or not. [*To MILUSA.*] And you, my pseudo-countess, please to come with me. [*They walk together acting and laughing.*]

CAPKOVA. [*Aside.*] I will spoil their game!—and yet it is really water for my mill. When the guardian arrives to-morrow and sees that flirting companion playing the countess and trying to entrap his son, he will dismiss her on the spot. [*She smiles malignantly.*]

COUNTESS. [*To CAPKOVA.*] What are you thinking about?

MILUSA. And what were you laughing about?

CAPKOVA. I was only thinking how droll it will be. Yes, my children; I will do all you want.

COUNTESS. That is simply to treat Milusa just as you do me, and to show her the same respect.

CAPKOVA. [*Aside.*] That will be a bitter pill for me! [*Aloud.*] Indeed, a pretty countess; such a stuck-up school-director's daughter!

MILUSA. [*To CAPKOVA.*] You need not be uneasy, lady's-maid; Erzika will lovingly lend me all that is necessary to act my part to the life.

CAPKOVA. [*Bowing to MILUSA.*] You must not be surprised if I forget myself sometimes, at first.

COUNTESS. Good! We must each try not to forget her part, and then we will see who acted best.

PISTA. [*Looks out of the window.*] Here is really my young master with Mr. Engineer; master is driving, and the coachman is sitting behind in the best seat.

COUNTESS. [*Looking also out of the window.*] They are dressed exactly alike. Which is the young baron?

PISTA. The one in the tight-buttoned coat with so much braid.

COUNTESS. Both have braided coats.

PISTA. Excuse me, I have no time; I must run to meet them.

COUNTESS. Pista, don't betray our plans to your young master.

PISTA. [*From the door.*] I will not betray them. [*He goes off.*]

COUNTESS. [*To MILUSA.*] Why are you standing there? Run and make your toilet. Take all my things,—my crino-

line and my chemisette, perfume, pomatum, bracelets, diamonds,—everything to make you look every inch a countess. [MILUSA goes off, while the COUNTESS says to CAPKOVA.] Now, maid, give your orders that all the servants shall treat Milusa as if she were the countess. [Both go.]

FOURTH SCENE.

LUDOVIT KOSTROVICKY, JAN ROHON, and PISTA.

[PISTA holds open the door for LUDOVIT and ROHON to enter.]

LUDOVIT. [To ROHON, in Hungarian.] I must say that is a real palace.

ROHON. Happy Lajos! Is not your heart beating very fast?

PISTA. [Aside.] Ha, ha! Sirs, if you only knew what a countess you are going to see!

LUDOVIT. My friend, do me one favor. The countess does not know either of us: I would really like to try if I could win her love as a plain engineer.

ROHON. And if I represent the young baron, supposing she were to fall really in love with me?

LUDOVIT. Then I must take her friend! ha, ha, ha!

ROHON. That would be truly romantic. I am certain to be caught by this close companionship, but I will do as you want.

LUDOVIT. [Embracing him.] We are friends till death, no matter how the affair ends.

ROHON. Ha, ha! if our friendship stands that test it is really immortal. A beautiful woman, like politics, can part the firmest friends. I do not wish Erzika to fall between us like an apple of discord. Love is not a thing to be played with. My heart is not a lump of ice, my friend.

LUDOVIT. I will risk it. [To PISTA.] Listen, Pista.

PISTA. Yes, sir.

LUDOVIT. Now, pay attention to what I order you. I wish to court the Countess Erzika while she thinks I am the engineer. So you must treat the engineer as if he were the Baron Ludovit Kostrovicky.

PISTA. [Scratches his head.] By all the luciferian elements! Meltosagos, sir.

LUDOVIT. [*Interrupts him.*] I have already told you that the engineer is your *meltosagos* master for the present. If you betray me here or at home you shall get twenty. Do you hear?

PISTA. I understand, I understand, *meltas*,—I meant engineer, sir. [*Aside.*] My goodness, but this is a real farce! [*Aloud.*] Ha, ha, ha!

LUDOVIT. What are you laughing about, you rascal?

PISTA. Must I tell the gracious countess?

LUDOVIT. She is the very one who is not to know that I am the Baron Kostrovicky; and now march.

ROHON. My friend, I have conscientious scruples; I do not like to deceive the countess.

LUDOVIT. Don't be such a pedant.

ROHON. [*Looking at himself in the glass.*] Well, I suppose I must take a part in this play. [*The door opens.*] Here she is.

FIFTH SCENE.

MILUSA, *dressed as a countess*, CAPKOVA, PISTA, and the preceding.

PISTA. [*Holding the door open.*] Gracious countess. [*He laughs.*]

ROHON. [*Bows to MILUSA and says in Hungarian.*] Your most obedient servant, dear countess.

MILUSA. [*Bows likewise.*] Excuse me, sir, if I kept you waiting, but I have just completed my toilet, as you came sooner than I expected. [*To ROHON.*] You are welcome, baron. I have not seen you since my childhood, and could really not have recalled your features.

CAPKOVA. [*Aside.*] He, he! of course.

ROHON. I really do not think I could recall yours either. [*Aside to LUDOVIT.*] A thousand devils! here I have been talking Slovak like a native.

LUDOVIT. [*Aside to him.*] A bad business. [*In Hungarian to MILUSA.*] I trust you will excuse me if I speak another language.

MILUSA. [*To ROHON.*] I suppose this is your good friend, the engineer, of whom Pista was speaking to me?

ROHON. [*Much embarrassed.*] Well—yes—he is my very good friend.

LUDOVIT. [*To MILUSA.*] I will perhaps be able to amuse your ladyship with some specimens of surveying. [*He bows.*]

PISTA and CAPKOVA. [*Aside.*] Ha, ha, ha! [*They hide their faces.*]

MILUSA. I shall be most happy! You are both welcome, Pista and you, *komorna* [lady's-maid], give us chairs. [*To ROHON and LUDOVIT.*] Please to be seated. [*They all sit down. PISTA and CAPKOVA go away laughing.*] [*To ROHON.*] And now, my dear Lajos—you will allow me to treat you in this friendly manner?

LUDOVIT. [*Impatiently to MILUSA.*] I must tell you that my friend has become a thorough Hungarian, and in a conversation in Slovak he feels about as lively as a fish out of water.

ROHON. [*To MILUSA.*] True, my dear Erzika; but how beautifully Hungarian would sound in your lovely mouth!

MILUSA. Ha, ha, ha! Excuse me, sirs, but Hungarian only sounds well when you are among Hungarians. Here Slovak is much finer.

LUDOVIT. [*Aside to ROHON.*] This Slavish mania is frightful.

MILUSA. My dear Lajos, please to remember that patriotism or the love of the country where you happen to have been born is the greatest of virtues. Let those who are born in Pest love everything Hungarian, but not those who are born in a Slovak-speaking community or region. [*She turns away.*]

LUDOVIT. [*Who has been drumming impatiently on the table, aside to ROHON.*] Now, my friend, have we not had a lecture?

ROHON. [*Aside to him.*] But she is quite right. [*Aloud to MILUSA.*] But, my dear countess, those of us who burn with love for their fatherland are often ridiculed.

MILUSA. The one who should be ridiculed is the one who neglects his own nation, who is ashamed of his countrymen and their manners and customs, who despises his mother-tongue. Such a man I would not want for a friend.

LUDOVIT. [*Jumps up.*] That is too much!

ROHON. [*Aside to him.*] Be quiet; what a charming creature!

MILUSA. I hope I have convinced you; but why do you look at me so steadfastly?

ROHON. [*Abruptly.*] If I may speak the truth it is from the deepest—— But first let me explain,—I sent you my picture.

LUDOVIT. [*Aside to ROHON, angrily.*] What the devil are you thinking about? Tell her at once you do not like her.

ROHON. [*Aside to LUDOVIT.*] I say that to that splendid woman! Why, I am over head and ears in love with her.

MILUSA. Gentlemen, it is a breach of etiquette to whisper together thus. [*To ROHON.*] If you wish, baron, to say that you do not like me, say it openly; I shall not be angry.

LUDOVIT. Say it bravely.

ROHON. [*To MILUSA, with deep emotion.*] Ah, countess! perhaps you do not like me.

MILUSA. [*With feeling to ROHON.*] I do not like you. [*Aside.*] Ah, woe me!

ROHON. [*Seizing her hand.*] Then, farewell, countess; may you be happy! [*He wishes to leave.*]

MILUSA. [*Detains him.*] Oh, no, baron! do not go. Even if I would not be your wife, I am not your enemy. Stay!

ROHON. [*Passionately.*] Oh, no, adorable countess; but I——

LUDOVIT. [*Hurriedly.*] Don't be a fool. [*Aloud to MILUSA.*] Baron Lajos wishes to say he would like you better if you were more tolerant of other nationalities.

ROHON. Tolerant! Oh! yes.

MILUSA. Excuse me if I must leave you for a short time. We are to have a harvest-feast. Here are books and music. [*She shows a portrait.*] Who does this look like?

LUDOVIT. [*Looking at it.*] May I ask if you painted this?

MILUSA. Yes; I did.

ROHON. And you paint! Do tell me if all the Slovak girls are your equals.

MILUSA. Do not underrate our girls. If you wear Hungarian clothes, Slovak blood flows in your veins.

ROHON. True, countess; you speak the truth.

LUDOVIT. [*Aside to ROHON.*] Idiot! don't forget that you may be a Magyar, but that you are not a baron.

ROHON. [*Aside to him.*] A thousand devils! true. I had nearly forgotten it. [*Aloud to MILUSA.*] What I meant, countess, was that you must have idealized the face, and made it more beautiful than the original.

LUDOVIT. [*Looking admiringly at the picture.*] It is lovely!

MILUSA. [*Aside.*] I painted the countess as a Slovak burgher's daughter.

LUDOVIT. [*Vehemently.*] Be she reaper or be she countess, it is the loveliest face I ever saw! It would be stupidity to suppose that that woman could be a Slovak.

ROHON. I must say I think the same.

MILUSA. Gentlemen, I can assure you that this is the portrait of the handsomest girl in this region, and you can see her this evening in the harvest-feast. Till we meet again. [*She goes.*]

SIXTH SCENE.

LUDOVIT and ROHON; later PISTA.

ROHON. [*Looks admiringly after MILUSA.*] Did you ever see such a charming creature?

LUDOVIT. But what a tongue! I sat the whole time as on hot coals.

ROHON. But is she not beautiful?

LUDOVIT. But I do not admire that style.

ROHON. And, then, how frank she is!

LUDOVIT. Frank rudeness!

ROHON. To be sure, *you* caught it; but I could have kissed her for every word she uttered.

LUDOVIT. My friend, please to remember that what you choose to call frankness was very ill timed.

ROHON. Now, now, friend Lajos, you know the proverb: "An ugly face don't love the looking-glass." But this dose of truth may do you good. Be a philosopher.

LUDOVIT. Fudge! I am opposed to all philosophy. But, to tell you the truth, I think she is as much in love with you as you with her.

ROHON. Do not joke, Lajos. It is a tender subject.

PISTA. [*In the doorway.*] Please, *meltosagos*,—that is, engineer master.

LUDOVIT. It is well you corrected yourself, Pista, and well you came. I think I shall go back again.

ROHON. Don't be so unreasonable, Lajos. She is beautiful, rich, and well educated, and you promised your father to comply with his wishes.

LUDOVIT. I shall simply tell father that she was rnde to me, and that she is a *Panslave*. [*To PISTA.*] What are you standing there for? Did you not understand that I want my carriage?

PISTA. Please, sir, I wish to say that there is a Slovack girl in the castle who is much handsomer than the countess. I would much rather marry her.

LUDOVIT. [*Interrupts him.*] Off with you, you rascal!

PISTA. [*To himself in going out.*] I am not going to get things ready till he has seen the true countess.

LUDOVIT. It serves me right for having thought of this masquerade. [*Both remain thoughtful.*]

SEVENTH SCENE.

The COUNTESS comes in to LUDOVIT and ROHON with a basket on her arm.

COUNTESS. [*Speaking to herself.*] Both so thoughtful!

LUDOVIT. [*To ROHON.*] My friend, I must speak my mind out. [*The COUNTESS coughs loudly, LUDOVIT turns round.*] Ha! what is this? What a beautiful girl!

ROHON. Does the countess wish to insult us?

LUDOVIT. [*Aside to ROHON.*] Perhaps. But the wonderful likeness to the portrait!

COUNTESS. [*To herself.*] He stares at me so he must like my looks.

LUDOVIT. [*Aloud to the COUNTESS.*] What do you want, beautiful maiden? Come nearer, my angel; do not be afraid of us.

COUNTESS. If you please, I am not an angel, and I am not afraid of you. I only want to see the young baron who wants to marry our mistress, and his friend, too. You have said, young gentlemen, that no Slovack girl can be as pretty as that picture. Now, please to look at me, for I am the one the countess painted there, and she dressed me up in the same way to-day for the harvest-feast. Admire me! [*She turns round before them.*]

LUDOVIT. [*Aside to ROHON.*] What a merry creature!

ROHON. [*Aside to him.*] Yes; but she is too free.

COUNTESS. Now, is my picture like me?

LUDOVIT. [*Aside to ROHON.*] Charming! Charming!

[*Aloud to the COUNTESS.*] Oh, it is exactly like you, only the living model is still handsomer than the portrait.

COUNTESS. [*Simply.*] A *potret*! I do not know what that word means, but that picture cannot be a *potray*.

LUDOVIT. [*Aside to ROHON.*] Ha, ha! it is a pity that she is so stupid! [*Aloud to the COUNTESS.*] My beautiful Slovack, if you will not allow it three times [*potret*], let me kiss your lovely face once.

COUNTESS. [*Threatens him with her hand.*] Get away from my five fingers! Do you see this basket? [*She aims it at him.*]

LUDOVIT. A thousand devils, but she is fierce!

ROHON. [*To LUDOVIT.*] You had better let her alone, my friend, or she will really send that basket at your head.

LUDOVIT. [*To the COUNTESS.*] Do not be so shy, my dear, receive advances more kindly. [*He approaches her.*]

COUNTESS. [*Raises her hand.*] If you do not wish to feel the weight of my hand you had better edge off a little, or you might fare like the writer who wished to describe my face, but I marked his for him with my basket. [*She shakes her basket in LUDOVIT's face.*]

LUDOVIT. [*Jumps back.*] She is a real devil; she would scratch.

ROHON. Please to let her alone. Slovacks do not understand jokes.

COUNTESS. [*To LUDOVIT.*] That young man is better behaved than you. He must have learned his catechism better at school.

LUDOVIT. [*Aside to ROHON.*] Is she not charmingly naïve? [*To her.*] Tell me which of us two is the baron?

COUNTESS. [*Looks at them both and says to herself.*] This wild one is the nicest, he must be the baron.

LUDOVIT. What do you think?

COUNTESS. I am not a prophet, but I think it must be you, sir.

LUDOVIT. Ha, ha, ha! you are wrong. [*Aside to ROHON.*] Wonderful! this Slovack has aristocratic instincts. [*To her.*] You are wrong, my dear; I am only an engineer. This gentleman [*pointing to ROHON*] is the young baron and your future master.

COUNTESS. [*Looks wonderingly at ROHON, and says to*

herself.] And he stands there so stiff and cold. I do not like him.

LUDOVIT. [*To the COUNTESS.*] Ha, ha! so you do not like the young baron? Go and kiss his hand instead of staring at him. He will be your master.

COUNTESS. [*To ROHON, who still stands very stiff.*] If you please, sir, the countess says she won't have you.

ROHON. [*Sadly.*] And has the countess really told you that?

COUNTESS. [*Aside.*] Amen! He is in love with Milusa, that is a settled thing. [*To ROHON.*] I am surprised that she does not like you, as you are such a steady young man. [*She wishes to go.*]

LUDOVIT. [*Stops her.*] Wait a little, you beautiful dove, and show me those lovely eyes. [*He looks into her eyes and says to ROHON.*] Her beauty will drive me mad!

COUNTESS. [*Struggling.*] Please to let me go, Mr. Baron—no, Mr. Engineer—or I will call the hussar, and what will he think of you? [*In going out she says to herself.*] Woe me, the engineer! [*PISTA is waiting for her at the door.*]

EIGHTH SCENE.

LUDOVIT, ROHON, and PISTA.

PISTA. [*Aside.*] Ha, ha! that is splendid; she has fallen in love with him! I have eyes! [*He laughs aloud.*] Ha, ha, ha!

LUDOVIT. [*Angrily to PISTA.*] The devil take you, you idiot!

PISTA. If you please, sir, you forgot to say exactly at what time you want your carriage.

LUDOVIT. It is true; I forgot it. But tell me, Pista, who is that Slovak girl who was in here just now?

PISTA. That girl! she is a bold one.

LUDOVIT. So you know her; what is her name?

PISTA. All I know about her is that she is the prettiest girl in the whole neighborhood. It is only a pity that she has such a real peasant's hand.

LUDOVIT. How is that?

PISTA. She gave me such a box on the ears that all my

teeth ache. [*Holding his face, says to himself.*] I must stir him up a little.

LUDOVIT. She would not have done it if you had not been worrying her, you villain. Now, if I hear of your following that girl I will make you remember it. Do you understand?

PISTA. As soon as the carriage is ready, are we to go home, sir?

LUDOVIT. Do not order it. I have changed my mind.

THIRD ACT.

The same room as in the first act.

FIRST SCENE.

COUNTESS and MILUSA.

COUNTESS. [*Sits sadly on a chair, dressed in her peasant's dress.*] Oh, I wish I had not been born a countess, and that I could marry for love!

MILUSA. Listen to me, dear countess. The young baron is worthy of you, and your equal in virtues and landed estates.

COUNTESS. But I do not like him. Moreover, he is in love with you. Towards me he was as still and cold as if I had been a statue.

MILUSA. That is very much in his favor, and shows that he is a moral young man, and too refined to admire a peasant girl, without manners or education.

COUNTESS. [*Interrupting her.*] No, no. I could not be happy with him. What do I care about silver and gold and estates? Besides, he prefers foreign manners and a foreign people. [*The COUNTESS goes.*]

SECOND SCENE.

MILUSA and ROHON.

ROHON. [*Near the door, to himself.*] What must I do? She can never be mine. [*To MILUSA.*] Gracious countess, I cannot deceive you any longer. I must confess all to you, and beg your pardon. [*He tries to fall on his knees before her.*]

MILUSA. [*Holds him back.*] For heaven's sake, baron,

stop! Do not say what you were going to say. [*To herself.*] He wishes to declare his love. I must not allow it.

ROHON. Gracious countess, I have deceived you.

MILUSA. [*Interrupts him.*] You are the one who has been deceived; but it was only a joke. I am no countess, but only Erzika's companion. My name is Milusa; and I did not think to steal your love by acting the countess's part. Nature has intended you for her, and she is worthy of you. Oh, forgive me!

ROHON. [*Ecstatically.*] Oh, how joyfully I forgive you! Your jest was a fortunate one for me. But tell me, who, then, is the real Countess Erzika?

MILUSA. [*Smiling.*] The one who was dressed as a reaper.

ROHON. [*To himself.*] Everything suits; but she whom I love is not a countess. Perhaps I dare hope. [*He stands undecided.*]

MILUSA. Baron, I must tell you that the beautiful reaper was very much displeased because you scarcely looked at her. That was excusable while you thought her a peasant; but I hope now you will make amends for your previous neglect.

ROHON. Never, never! I love you, Milusa, and, compelled by my ardent love, I now fall at your feet and offer you my hand and name. [*He kneels before her and seizes her hand.* The COUNTESS and CAPKOVA appear at the door.]

MILUSA. [*Not noticing the COUNTESS.*] Get up, baron, get up, and do not trifle with a poor girl. I have told you I am no countess. [*She takes her hand away.*]

ROHON. [*Not seeing the others.*] But you are a refined and patriotic Slovack, and as such I want you for my wife,—you must be mine! [*He rises and embraces her.*]

MILUSA. [*Sees the COUNTESS.*] What I feared has happened. But see there the beautiful reaper. [*They both look at the COUNTESS, who is as motionless as if she had been turned to stone.*]

CAPKOVA. [*In the doorway, to herself.*] It is as I hoped. This will certainly be the false countess's last day in our castle. Ha, ha! [*She laughs.*]

THIRD SCENE.

COUNTESS, MILUSA, and ROHON.

COUNTESS. I see that I am here *de trop*. [*She wishes to go.*]ROHON. [*Stops her.*] Illustrious countess!COUNTESS. [*Astonished.*] Who told you that I am the countess?

ROHON. Milusa, my beloved and your faithful friend.

COUNTESS. [*Surprised.*] So?

ROHON. Yes; I have fallen in love with her beauty and virtue, and beg you, countess, to give her to me for my wife.

MILUSA. Do not mind him, countess; the baron does not know what he is saying.

COUNTESS. If he wishes to raise you to our level——

ROHON. I am thoroughly in earnest, countess, and wish to marry Milusa.

MILUSA. Baron, such jests are unbecoming to you.

COUNTESS. [*To ROHON.*] If you are in earnest, I can only say I am surprised at your choice.

ROHON. Know that I am not the baron. He forced me to play his part. I am only his friend, the engineer.

COUNTESS. [*Delighted.*] What? you are not the baron?MILUSA. [*Delighted.*] You are the engineer?COUNTESS. [*Cunningly.*] And the other cavalier?ROHON. [*With a smile.*] Is the Baron Lajos. We exchanged rôles, and thus had paid you off in your own coin.

MILUSA. Then I am no longer surprised at your love for everything Hungarian.

COUNTESS. But where is Baron Kostrovicky now?

ROHON. He is looking for you among the reapers.

COUNTESS. [*Joyfully.*] Really?

ROHON. I am afraid his Hungarian mania is in great danger.

COUNTESS. Then our double comedy has been successful.

ROHON. And I have also become a Slovak. [*To the COUNTESS.*] Lovely reaper, give me Milusa. [*He bows low to her.*]

COUNTESS. Milusa is yours, but not wholly so till you have her father's consent.

ROHON. I am the happiest of men.

MILUSA. And Baron Lajos will be still happier.

COUNTESS. I make no promises. But, my friends, let us make our harvest-feast as romantic as possible, and keep up

our parts. What a triumph it will be for me if I can subdue his aristocratic pride and make him offer to a poor Slovack his hand and name!

MILUSA. That would be a fearful test of love.

COUNTRESS. But how great would be his delight when the metamorphosis takes place and the poor reaper appears as the Countess Erzika! So it is understood Lajos is to know nothing about what has now taken place. [*She goes.*]

FOURTH SCENE.

The stage represents a garden; against the castle wall are seats.

LUDOVIT, *then* MILUSA and ROHON.

LUDOVIT. [*Comes into the garden much excited.*] I have sought her everywhere in vain, and all the peasants whom I have asked about her have laughed at me. And that rascally hussar of mine looks at me as if either he or I were crazy! Well, I must wait for the Slovack procession; perhaps she will be in it. Ha! there are the pseudo-baron and that enthusiastic countess!

MILUSA. [*To LUDOVIT.*] Aj, aj, Sir Engineer. I suppose you are seeking the fair one whom you could not see at the dinner-table?

ROHON. [*To MILUSA.*] Countess, you must excuse my friend; he is of a melancholy turn of mind.

MILUSA. Sentimental melancholy is very attractive.

LUDOVIT. [*Dryly.*] Excuse me, countess; my aim is simply——

MILUSA. [*Interrupting him.*] Pure philanthropy. I understand.

ROHON. Countess, my friend is only looking at your grounds with the eye of an engineer, and beauty and symmetry have also a charm for one in love with geometry.

LUDOVIT. [*Aside.*] Oh, the rascal! [*Aloud.*] Yes, illustrious countess; symmetry!

MILUSA. Well, sir, have you found anything to admire?

LUDOVIT. Here, in the garden, most certainly nothing.

ROHON. And I, on the contrary, have found everything that is beautiful! [*He kisses her hand.*]

LUDOVIT. [*Aside to him.*] A thousand devils! are you crazy?

MILUSA. [*To ROHON.*] My dear Lajos, I only wanted to

test your love,—for I feel assured that you do love me,—and I am quite willing to give you my hand. [*He seizes it and kisses it with rapture.*]

LUDOVIT. [*Angrily to him aside.*] Are you crazy, or are you dreaming? [*A chorus is heard in the distance.*] What is that?

MILUSA. That is the song of the reapers in honor of the harvest-feast. Listen! it is one of our national Slovak airs. [*They listen.*] How do you like it?

LUDOVIT. Oh, it is beautiful! [*Aside.*] Perhaps she is singing in it.

FIFTH SCENE.

The foregoing, COUNTESS, THOMAS, and REAPERS of both sexes. The COUNTESS, dressed as a reaper, with a wreath on her head, is led forward by THOMAS, in the national costume. The other reapers follow them. MILUSA and ROHON are seated.

LUDOVIT. Ha! it is she; how beautiful! If I could only get out among them!

COUNTESS. [*Taking the wreath from her head, offers it to MILUSA.*] Take this wreath, dear countess, it is made of wheat and barley, and is as pure as yourself. God grant that there may always be enough of these, His precious gifts, for us all! [*MILUSA takes the wreath.*]

MILUSA. Thanks, my good friends. Whenever there is not bread enough, your good countess must divide with you. Land-owners are in God's stead towards you. [*To the COUNTESS.*] Is it not so, my dear girl?

COUNTESS. [*With feeling.*] Yes, indeed, dear lady.

REAPERS. *Slava!*

FEMALE REAPERS. Long live our beautiful reaper!

LUDOVIT. [*Aside to ROHON.*] My friend, I like this; it is quite like being at the theatre.

MILUSA. [*To the COUNTESS.*] Now, my dear girl, you so kindly gave me your wreath, and in exchange I give you from my hair this bunch of flowers, with the bow. [*She pins it in her hair.*]

COUNTESS. Many thanks to your grace. How pretty it is! [*To LUDOVIT.*] Do you not think so, young gentleman?

MILUSA. [*To LUDOVIT.*] Aj, aj, Sir Engineer! She seems

to know you very well, or she would not dare to appeal to you thus.

LUDOVIT. [*With feeling.*] Well, yes. *Au revoir.* [*Aside.*] What a charming creature!

MILUSA. [*To LUDOVIT.*] Is that what you call symmetry, Sir Engineer? [*To the reapers.*] Thanks once more, my children! Take this little gift from me in remembrance of this present joyous harvest-feast. [*She goes among them with ROHON, and gives each one a present.*]

[*She goes off with ROHON, and the reapers follow them.*]

SIXTH SCENE.

COUNTESS and LUDOVIT.

COUNTESS. Well, young gentlemen, will you not come and eat some cakes with us? [*She tries to go.*]

LUDOVIT. [*Calls to her.*] Wait a while, my dear! Why did you not sing with the others?

COUNTESS. If you please, I do not know how to sing. [*She hums.*]

“How to sing I never learned,
But my bread I always earned.”

LUDOVIT. That is not the right tune; try again. [*He seizes her hand.*]

COUNTESS. You hold my hand too tight, young gentleman.

LUDOVIT. This hand is as fair and soft as if it had never known work. Tell me, how is this?

COUNTESS. Let me loose first, and then I will tell you. [*She snatches her hand away.*]

LUDOVIT. Are your parents living?

COUNTESS. Ah, no! I am a poor orphan.

LUDOVIT. Poor thing! That is the reason you have to work so hard. I would gladly help you. Tell me, do you like me?

COUNTESS. That is not a fair question. You are a high gentleman, and I only a lowly peasant.

LUDOVIT. [*To himself.*] A thousand pities that she is not high enough! [*Aloud.*] Then you do not know how to read, my golden dove?

COUNTESS. So, so! What idea have you of us Slovack

girls? We have a splendid school-director, and he teaches us all the spelling-book. And in Slovack there are such nice prayer-books, and that is a help for us poor girls.

LUDOVIT. [*Aside.*] Unfortunate stupidity of our country! [*To her.*] And would you not like me to teach you something?

COUNTRESS. Ha, ha, ha! you teach me! You do not look as old as our school-director, and then it would be too funny for me to go to school again, when I am grown up!

LUDOVIT. [*Lovingly.*] I love you sincerely. Give me one little kiss. [*He tries to embrace her.*]

COUNTRESS. You had better not, or I'll scream. [*She screams.*]

LUDOVIT. [*Jumps back.*] A thousand devils! Who would have thought you were so shy?

COUNTRESS. Let me tell you what. If you are so fond of kissing, kiss my hand. [*Seeing MILUSA and ROHON in the background.*] Pst!

LUDOVIT. [*Without minding the witnesses.*] Oh, with pleasure, my dear! [*He kisses her hand.*] How soft and white this dear hand is!

SEVENTH SCENE.

MILUSA and ROHON and the preceding.

MILUSA. Aj, aj, that is an original idea! I could not have believed that a young man of culture and refinement would kiss the hand of a peasant girl!

ROHON. [*To MILUSA.*] Ha, ha, ha, countess! My friend here seems to have overcome his prejudices against the Slovacks.

MILUSA. He is excusable, for he loves the prettiest Slovack girl in existence. [*To the COUNTRESS.*] But you, my girl, why did you remain in the castle?

COUNTRESS. It was not my fault. This young gentleman held me, and said I was his dear, and his gold dove, and he squeezed my hand, and he said he loved me sincerely, and he wants to educate me.

MILUSA. Very fine! [*Ironically to LUDOVIT.*] So you would like to educate her, Sir Engineer!

ROHON. Ha, ha! Such is the value of symmetry of figure.

LUDOVIT. Yes; the girl told me she was an unfortunate orphan, and was obliged to do hard work because she had not had any education.

MILUSA. So you wish to emancipate her and train her according to your own system. If your love for her is so ardent that——

LUDOVIT. That! what do you mean?

MILUSA. That you would be willing to choose her as your companion for life.

LUDOVIT. Allow me, countess. I think a young man may jest with a young girl.

COUNTESS. [*Sorrowfully.*] So the young gentleman was only jesting, and I thought he was in earnest.

MILUSA. [*To LUDOVIT.*] Sir Engineer, you have not been sufficiently careful of the honor of my house. All the servants and the reapers know that this girl has been alone with you all this time. Our customs are not those of Pest. We are Slovacks. The only course you can take now is to marry her.

LUDOVIT. [*With dignity.*] You compel me to throw off my mask. Know then, countess, that I am Baron Ludovit Kostrovicky. The one who loves you is the engineer. You are free to return his love if you choose, but I protest against a peasant bride being forced upon me.

MILUSA. [*Wonderingly.*] And is this the etiquette you have learned in Pest? You have deceived me and the whole household. [*To ROHON.*] And you, Sir Engineer, how could you lend your help to such a *sottise*? You see, my girl, [*to the COUNTESS*] you are not needed here. Adieu, gentlemen. [*She goes off with the COUNTESS.*]

ROHON. You see, Lajos, how we have fared for carrying out your famous "idea." The countess is angry with me. I will go and throw myself at her feet. She is good; perhaps she will forgive us, and she may yet be yours. [*He goes.*]

EIGHTH SCENE.

LUDOVIT; *later* PISTA and ORIESKA.

LUDOVIT. Forgive us! I wish I had never put my foot in this proud castle. But I am sorry for that beautiful Slovack. If she were only as cultivated as she is handsome! How happy I could then be with her in some romantic valley,

in a little hut with a pretty garden ! But with her I could not think of it. She is a simple, unpolished peasant girl.

PISTA. [*Comes along talking to ORIESKA.*] So it is, Mr. Rector. It is a pity you were not at the harvest-feast. All went off splendidly. But there is the illustrious young baron. [*He points to LUDOVIT.*]

ORIESKA. [*Bowing low to LUDOVIT.*] What happiness for me, illustrious sir, to greet within these walls our future lord and master !

LUDOVIT. [*Impatiently to PISTA.*] What does he want with me ?

PISTA. It is the school-director.

ORIESKA. [*Bowing low.*] At your service, illustrious sir ; I am the director of the school here. I am very glad that you could witness our harvest festivities. My daughter played the part of the leader of the reaper maidens.

LUDOVIT. [*Interrupting him.*] What is that you say about your daughter ?

ORIESKA. At your service, sir ; my daughter Milusa is the Countess Erzika's companion. Did she not act her part beautifully at the feast ?

LUDOVIT. Only too well. [*Harshly.*] Woe to you, old man, if you deceive me in telling me she is your daughter !

ORIESKA. Heaven forbid that I should ever deceive such a gentleman. But here, this man [*pointing to PISTA*] knows all about her.

LUDOVIT. [*To PISTA.*] Why did you not tell me this ?

PISTA. Ha, ha, ha ! the illustrious countess told me not to tell you. [*Aside.*] If I must play comedy I must make up my answers to suit. [*He goes off, laughing.*]

LUDOVIT. So you are the father of that girl. She told me she was an orphan.

ORIESKA. Oh, sir, she was only joking.

LUDOVIT. Most unwise teacher, why did you not polish your daughter a little ? Why did you not teach her something ?

ORIESKA. [*Anxiously.*] I hope she has not been guilty of any want of respect to you, illustrious sir.

LUDOVIT. No ; not that ; but she has such vulgar, unpolished manners.

ORIESKA. Ha, ha, ha ! then she acted her part well. She

only thought of taking it this morning.' I could not see her acting, as I had to direct the choir. Was the singing good?

LUDOVIT. Excellent; but what is this you are telling me; then your Milusa is educated?

ORIESKA. Indeed, she is, sir. I am not a rich man, but I have spared no pains nor expense on my only child. A good education is the best inheritance I could leave her. I am as poor as Job, but I am happy, and feel that I have done my duty by her.

LUDOVIT. [*To himself.*] I really like that man. [*To him.*] You have a beautiful daughter; but does she know any Hungarian, or is she a fearful patriot?

ORIESKA. She loves the Slovack nation with her whole heart; but she does not meddle with politics.

LUDOVIT. Give me your daughter for my wife, and she will teach me to love my own country even as she does.

ORIESKA. Sir, I have been praising my daughter, but I did not expect you to make fun of a poor man.

LUDOVIT. No, my good man; I am not joking. I loved Milusa when I thought she was a simple reaper, and now that I hear that she is your daughter and educated, I wish to make her happy. I honor your calling, sir.

ORIESKA. By heaven! he is not joking. Hm! that would be a most unexpected honor for my daughter; but no, no; it cannot be.

NINTH SCENE.

ROHON *and* PISTA, *with the preceding.*

ROHON. [*To LUDOVIT.*] Victory, my friend! Countess Erzika is appeased and willing once more to marry you.

LUDOVIT. So! But I do not need her. [*To ORIESKA.*] Do not be uneasy, Mr. Rector; I do not love the countess.

ROHON. Ha! is this man Milusa's father?

ORIESKA. [*To ROHON.*] At your service, sir. I am the school-teacher of this place.

ROHON. Oh, may you live a hundred years, excellent man! Honor to you, who have brought up your daughter in sentiments of virtue and patriotism. I am a well-to-do engineer, and I love your daughter to distraction. Give me her hand,

and thereby you will assure my happiness for my whole life.

LUDOVIT. [*Hastily.*] My friend, nothing can come of this. [*To ORIESKA.*] Mr. Rector, I asked for your daughter's hand first. She loves me. I have the best right to her.

ORIESKA. Are you playing a comedy with me, gentlemen? Mr. Engineer, may I beg—

PISTA. [*Comes in hurriedly and says to LUDOVIT.*] *Melto-sagos*, sir, the old baron, your father, has arrived. The lady's-maid has already related to him that you do not want to marry the Countess Erzika, but that you love Milusa, her companion: he is as hot as fire, and says he will drive Milusa away from the castle, and will teach you obedience.

LUDOVIT. Won't there be a fearful scene? [*To ORIESKA.*] Mr. Rector, I will not give up your daughter.

ROHON. [*To ORIESKA.*] Mr. Rector, I love your daughter; give her to me.

ORIESKA. A thousand thanks; but the baron asked first for Milusa.

ROHON. He must marry the Countess Erzika; his father will force him to it.

LUDOVIT. Do not make me angry. You know that Milusa loves me, and not you. You have no right to her at all, do you understand? I honor my father, but I do not love the countess. [*He goes.*]

ROHON. [*Calls after him.*] That is not true. You had better just go and talk it over with your father. [*LUDOVIT turns round angrily.*] Milusa shall be mine. I would rather lose my life than her.

LUDOVIT. [*From the door.*] My friend, if you wish, we can settle the question with pistols.

ROHON. Oh! thank you; I have no wish to do so.

LUDOVIT. You coward! To-morrow, at seven o'clock; do you hear? [*He goes.*]

ROHON. Ha, ha, ha! You see, Mr. Rector, you must be my second. [*He shakes his hand.*]

ORIESKA. May heaven preserve us from a duel!

ROHON. I think we will settle this matter without bloodshed. I will explain all to you some time, Mr. Rector.

TENTH SCENE.

The same room as in the beginning of the play.

BARON KOSTROVICKY *and* CAPKOVA.

[KOSTROVICKY *is sitting in an arm-chair, and* CAPKOVA *is standing before him.*]

KOSTROVICKY. Now, now, *komorna*. It can all be put to rights. Of course my Lajos thought he was making love to Erzika; Milusa ought never to have deceived him thus, and given herself out for the countess.

CAPKOVA. Oh, of course, she knew what she was doing, and she has quite bewitched the young baron,—and as long as she is here——

KOSTROVICKY. [*Sorrowfully.*] Who would have thought that rector's daughter could be so deceitful, and repay all my kindness with such black ingratitude; but it is not so easy to send her suddenly away!

CAPKOVA. I would undertake that unpleasant duty for you, most gracious baron.

KOSTROVICKY. But where is my Lajos? I must beat this folly out of his head. [*To CAPKOVA.*] Send him to me at once.

CAPKOVA. Yes, sir. [*She goes.*]

KOSTROVICKY. I shall be sorry; but that ungrateful girl does not deserve pity; but how could I keep Lajos away from her? Perhaps she is less dangerous here than elsewhere. [*LUDOVIT comes.*] Ha, there is my son!

ELEVENTH SCENE.

KOSTROVICKY *and* LUDOVIT.

LUDOVIT. My dearest father! [*He kisses his hand.*]

KOSTROVICKY. [*Embracing him.*] *Servus*, my dear son, I expect obedience from you.

LUDOVIT. I honor my father, but I do not like the countess.

KOSTROVICKY. My son, listen to your father, who loves you so well. Erzika is beautiful and cultivated, of a noble family, and richly endowed with virtues and worldly goods.

LUDOVIT. But, my dear father, she does not love me either.

KOSTROVICKY. But she cannot help liking you ; she must.

LUDOVIT. And what do I care for such forced love ! Her riches are greater than her refinement ; whereas Milusa's virtues are her sole possession. I do not need a long chain of ancestry, nor diamonds, nor gold. I would rather heart should meet heart than that estate should join estate.

KOSTROVICKY. [*Aside.*] A thousand devils ! Who would have expected such reasoning from him ? [*Aloud.*] My dear son ! I am really proud of your sentiments, but still I cannot consent to plebeian blood being mingled with ours. I cannot have our honor compromised before the neighboring gentry.

LUDOVIT. What do I care about them, if I have a loving wife at home ?

KOSTROVICKY. [*Ironically.*] That is all very fine ; but marry Erzika you must and shall !

TWELFTH SCENE.

CAPKOVA, ROHON, and the preceding.

CAPKOVA. [*Leading ROHON by the hand to KOSTROVICKY.*] Here, gracious baron, I bring you the young baron, your Lajos. He was afraid to appear before you. [*To ROHON.*] Do not be afraid, young sir ; your gracious papa will forgive you all. [*She leads him to KOSTROVICKY.*] Kiss his hand !

ROHON. [*Objects.*] Ha, ha, ha !

KOSTROVICKY. A thousand devils ! Has that old granny lost her senses ?

ROHON. [*Laughing.*] Will you soon let me loose ?

CAPKOVA. [*To ROHON.*] Yes, presently, Herr Baron.

KOSTROVICKY. [*To CAPKOVA.*] Oh, you silly woman ; go and buy a pair of spectacles, if you cannot see better than that !

LUDOVIT. [*To CAPKOVA.*] *Komorna*, I am the young baron.

CAPKOVA. Nonsense ! you are the engineer !

ROHON. [*To CAPKOVA.*] Have you been drinking too much, Mrs. Lady's-maid ?

CAPKOVA. [*To ROHON.*] I never took too much in my

life; and every word that I have spoken is gospel truth! Baron Lajos loves Milusa.

ROHON. That is not true.

THIRTEENTH SCENE.

The foregoing, ORIESKA, and MILUSA.

ORIESKA. [*To KOSTROVICKY.*] Illustrious sir, will you give me your advice? These two young gentlemen have asked for my daughter's hand. The first was Baron Lajos, and he has the best right——

KOSTROVICKY. [*Interrupts him.*] Take her to the devil!

CAPKOVA. [*To KOSTROVICKY.*] Now, what do you say, gracious sir?

ORIESKA. [*To LUDOVIT.*] And yet, sir, do not take it amiss if my daughter refuses your offer.

LUDOVIT. Thunder and lightning!

KOSTROVICKY. [*To ORIESKA.*] Mr. Rector, you are a most wise and excellent man. But who, then, is the other who wants your Milusa? [*MILUSA comes in.*]

ORIESKA. [*Showing ROHON.*] This engineer.

KOSTROVICKY. [*Joyfully to ROHON.*] You?

ROHON. [*Holding MILUSA by the hand.*] Yes, baron; all is in order. You see before you a happy pair. [*He bows.*]

KOSTROVICKY. Well done, Mr. Engineer; you are an honest man. You will make Milusa an excellent husband, and I will give her a dowry.

CAPKOVA. [*To KOSTROVICKY.*] Most illustrious baron, are you out of your mind? You are giving your son to that girl!

KOSTROVICKY. *Teremtette!* Can't that old hag hold her tongue?

ORIESKA. [*To CAPKOVA.*] Ha, ha, ha! *Komorna*, you cannot slander us any more.

LUDOVIT. A thousand devils! Are you all crazy, or do you wish to make me so? [*To ORIESKA.*] Is this lady [*pointing to MILUSA*] really your daughter?

ORIESKA. She certainly is.

LUDOVIT. And who was the other one?

ORIESKA. Guess yourself.

LUDOVIT. Could it be Erzika?

ORIESKA. She took her *revanche* by playing the part of the queen in the harvest-feast, while my daughter was the pseudo-countess.

KOSTROVICKY. [*Laughing.*] That was a good joke.

ORIESKA. The false baron fell in love with her, and the real countess fell in love with the false engineer.

KOSTROVICKY. Ha, ha! My children, you have really given us a most laughable farce.

MILUSA. [*To CAPKOVA.*] What say you, Mrs. Lady's-maid; will you dance at my wedding?

CAPKOVA. Of course. [*Aside.*] Catch me doing it!

PISTA. [*Running in to LUDOVIT.*] *Meltosagos*, sir, shall I bring you Milusa?

LUDOVIT. You rascal! why did you not tell me which was Erzika?

PISTA. Please, sir, I wanted to, but you said you would give me twenty lashes if I said a word. Ha, ha, ha!

LUDOVIT. You rogue!

FOURTEENTH SCENE.

The foregoing, the COUNTESS, and the HARVESTERS.

[*The COUNTESS comes forward in national costume, led by a youth, and says to KOSTROVICKY.*] I beg you, gracious sir, to allow us to close our harvest-feast merrily in your presence.

KOSTROVICKY. Splendid! You beautiful creature, I do not wonder that my Lajos is raving about you.

COUNTESS. [*To LUDOVIT.*] Raving?

LUDOVIT. [*To her.*] Oh, yes, Countess Erzika. [*He kneels before her and presses his lips to her hand.*]

COUNTESS. [*Interrupting him.*] Rise, baron; you know it is Milusa you love.

ALL. [*Laughing.*] Ha, ha, ha!

LUDOVIT. My golden dove, you really put my love to a severe test, but I am only so much the happier now. And now, will you not tell me if you love me as I do you?

COUNTESS. [*Turning to him and embracing him.*] With my whole heart.

KOSTROVICKY. And now, my dear children, receive a

father's blessing. [*He blesses them.*] Love each other truly and live happily.

LUDOVIT. [*Embraces his father.*] Dear father, how grateful I am to you! [*To MILUSA.*] I thank you, dear lady, for the lesson you gave me. I shall henceforth be a true Slovak in mind and action.

VII.

BLACK EYES.

BY DON PEDRO ANTONIO DE ALARCON.

TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH

BY MRS. FRANCES C. HENDERSON.

I.

BEYOND the Arctic Circle, on the coast of Lapland, near Hammefert, the last inhabitable village in Europe, rises, in a sea which is frozen six months in the year, the black, steep, and gigantic island Loppen. The first leaves were falling, in the year 1730. It was the 15th of August. The nights were then only three hours long, and the aurora borealis shone, throwing its crimson splendors over the twilight. It was just a week since the moon had reappeared in that sky after a month and a half of complete absence. Everything announced the approach of winter, that white spectre who throws a shroud over those dreary latitudes, which turn to stone in his cold embrace.

The nobles shut themselves up in their castles, the poor in their huts, the white bears in their ice-dens. A few birds kept to their nests on the leafless trees, but the most flew to the south, in search of new springs. The whalers and the Greenlanders set their sails towards Europe, dreading being frozen up. The fields, the ports, the villages even, looked deserted and abandoned. One would have thought that some horrible plague had passed over them, or that they were dreading the approach of some bloody conqueror. And so must those regions remain during seven months of silence and desolation.

II.

On the barren peaks of the island of Loppen stood a castle, which seemed to be an outgrowth of their barren crests, so old and moss-grown were its walls, cut out of the living rock. What is seen from the outside is not a work of building, but of excavation; so that from the sea one sees only the towers of the fortress; the rest is, as it were, buried in the heart of the island. A few oval openings cut in the rock to let light into the interior indicate vaguely the seven stories of the castle, in the lowest of which, completely inaccessible to the rigors of winter, dwelt the lords of this subterranean Alcazar.

There it is always night. In a triangular drawing-room, hung with rich furs, and lighted by six resinous torches, burnt on the aforementioned evening an enormous pine log, resting on an iron tripod. The smoke escaped in a gigantic column through a hole in the arched roof of this room, situated a hundred feet below the open air, while an immense open gallery in front of the chimney brought a constant current of tepid and perfumed air.

There were two persons in this room. One of the two was sleeping on a low couch. This was Magno de Rimi, the lord of the island of Loppen. He might be twenty-five years old. He wore a loose shirt of black fur, over which he had donned a luxurious costume, half warlike, half courtier-like. This youth, who would not have been considered handsome in the south, was yet endowed with a strange kind of beauty. He was low, and slightly thick-set, or rather robust, very dark-skinned, but with hair as red as gold, which fell upon his shoulders, and eyes of a blue as light as is the sky of Spain on a fine day in January. He was as beardless as a woman, but his face indicated so much strength and decision that no one would have felt inclined to doubt his valor.

In front of him a woman, still little more than a child, was praying silently. The firelight illumined her face, which was as white as alabaster, with a rosy tinge. Her eyes were of a heavenly blue, and her whole appearance was as delicate and fair as the flowers which bloom and die in one summer's day. She was completely covered by a flowing tunic of ermine fur, with a hood going over her head. She looked like a small heap of virgin snow, or like a white flower floating in a sea

of foam. This was the *jarlesa* Fœdora, the wife of young Magno.

The couple had been for some time in their present position. Fœdora, whose face showed the traces of an ineffable sorrow, kept her eyes mournfully fixed on the floor. Occasionally she raised them to Magno's dark figure, and then her whole body quivered slightly, and she resumed her prayers with still greater fervor.

Once Magno opened his eyes suddenly and caught the timid glance of his wife.

"Were you sleeping?" said she, in a low, sweet voice.

"No, señora," replied Magno. "Why do you look at me thus?"

Fœdora trembled, but presently she replied, "Because I love you so much." She wiped her eyes and returned to her prayers; but her fingers lingered on the beads of her amber rosary.

They spoke no more; they had already spoken more than was their wont.

III.

Fœdora had been married for three years to the Jarl of Rimi, but they had not yet passed a winter in their castle on Loppen. Previously they had gone to Christiania, where the life of the nobles is a continued round of gayety during the winter months; but this year, after having spent the months of June and July in travelling along the coast of Norway, Magno decided to bury himself with his wife in the Alcazar of ice which we have just described. Here alone, and taciturn, one in front of the other, they had already spent fifteen days. They would not be able to leave it for eight months, as winter had frozen the first snows fast over the castle door.

IV.

Fifteen nights have passed.

Magno de Rimi had asked for his Scandinavian harp, and was singing ballads to his wife:

"Kneeling on my father's tomb,
On the tomb of my father
A promise of eternal love you gave.
Should ever you break that vow
I pray you now, my darling,
Oh! never go near my father's grave."

Magno's voice reverberated like thunder through the echoes of the castle as he repeated the last verse of his song. He turned immediately to the young wife at his side, and said, "What are you doing, Fœdora?"

"I am praying for the soul of your father," said she, closing her eyes so as not to see the bitter smile which curled his lip.

Magno touched his harp again and continued his ballad:

"Light shining in the azure sky,
Flowers blooming in the vale,
Here below did my fathers die,
Here shall all my sons be born.
If you see here my son's grave,
Oh! pass not where my fathers lie."

The amber rosary fell from Fœdora's hands on to the burning coals on the hearth. Some of the beads began to burn, casting a delicious perfume around.

"How do you feel, señora?" asked Magno, as if he had seen nothing.

"Well, Magno."

"Have you still any doubt as to your condition?"

"No, señor."

"You are going to be a mother. What bliss! The hopes of the last three years will now be realized."

"Yes," sweetly replied the wife.

"And when may we hope?"

"About March."

"I think so myself," replied the jarl, playing arpeggios on his harp and preparing to sing.

Fœdora crossed her hands and bent her head.

Magnus sang:

"A stranger roams
On the mountain.
His eyes are black,
Black is his hair;
His first-born son
Will surely have
Hair black as coal,
Eyes black as jet."

"Oh, hush!" murmured Fœdora, falling on her knees.

"Did you know your ancestors?" exclaimed Magno in the most indifferent tone, raising his wife at the same time.

"How, señor?" asked the poor wife, stretching out her hands.

"What colored eyes had they? Answer!"

"They had blue eyes."

"And did you know my ancestors?"

"No, señor."

"You are going to know them now," replied the young man, taking his wife by the arm and dragging her slowly towards the picture-gallery. In it there was a long row of portraits illuminated by torches held from space to space. The venerable features of the Señores de Rimi seemed alive and restless in their frames.

"These are my ancestors!" exclaimed the jarl. "Look at them, señora! All of them have blue eyes, like you and I, like your father and your ancestors, like all Scandinavians. You will readily understand that our son must also have blue eyes!"

He spoke and departed, laughing convulsively, while the wife, who had thus far kept her footing simply because the jarl held her by the arm, fell on her knees, speechless and breathless.

Several hours passed; and when everything was silent in the castle, and the torches had burnt out, and the fire had also burnt out in the drawing-room, she rose from her knees, like one released from the rack, and wended her way to her bed-chamber.

When she arrived there and found herself alone, she sighed deeply. She had not sufficient strength to stand up. She leaned against the wall, lost in meditation.

"My son," murmured she, at last, with a hollow, sepulchral voice, pressing both hands upon her heart as if it might be the heart of her child,—“my son, why do you wish to be your mother's executioner?"

Catching sight of herself in the looking-glass, she fled horrified to the other corner of the room, covering her face with her hands. It was the statue of remorse cursing itself.

V.

Five months have passed.

Magno de Rimi is in his own private room. He is seated with his elbows resting on the table, supporting his forehead

with his feverish hands, and gazing steadfastly at two objects which he seems to wish to engrave in his most secret soul, so close is the attention with which he eyes them.

These two objects are a portrait and a letter. The portrait represented a very handsome youth, not more than twenty years old, in a rich Norwegian garb, but with most marked southern physiognomy; his locks, as black as ebony, make a frame round a face dark and pale as are the Albanians; his eyes, still blacker, shine like polished jet under coal-black eyebrows. A little down covers his upper lip, pouting gracefully under a straight, delicate nose, which recalls the Caucasian type. The contrast between this face and that of the man who was looking at him so intently, and indeed of all the races inhabiting Scandinavia, was as striking as would be a white man in Ethiopia, or a negro in melancholy Albion. Magno de Rimi looked at him with mingled hate and admiration.

The letter read thus :

"TO THE HIGH-BORN JARL MAGNO DE RIMI, his servant Stanislas :

"Señor! come, come to Christiana! You have lost love! Save your honor! The Jarlesa Fœdora is faithless to you. For the last few days there has been at this court a young stranger beautiful as the angel of darkness. He has robbed you of your wife's heart. Looks and sighs, words and smiles, everything betrays their mutual passion. I have been thrown out of the house like a dog, but like a dog faithful to his master. Come, I say, perhaps it is still time.

"The assassin of your happiness is either an Italian, a Greek, a Moor, or a Jew. His eyes are as black as night, and his hair like ebony. He is noble and powerful. You can kill him. He has bought two castles on the banks of the Yo, and he has ships in the port of the island of Langoë. His name is Alfonso de Haro. Come, and count on the arm of your servant

STANISLAS."

Magno de Rimi contemplated this portrait and this letter for many hours. At last he arose, he looked at a watch which marked midnight, and opening a book which was formed of two tablets of ivory, he traced in it a black line.

Twenty-four hours of night had passed. Another dark day had commenced. The jarl counted the strokes already there, and found that there were still thirty-five days wanting till the reappearance of the sun.

"This is the 22d of December," said he. "Within seventy days the babe will be born, and I shall know the truth of everything. On the 20th day of April I can set sail. If Fœdora has betrayed me, I can be revenged on them all within the year." And, smiling darkly, he drew the curtains of his bed and lay down.

VI.

Two months later the Jarlesa Fœdora gave birth to a child with *black eyes*.

VII.

Three months after the rising of the sun spring began in the island of Loppen. The sea burst the chains of ice which bound it to the foot of the castle. The birds returned to those skies; the springs flowed once more. Flowers burst through the snow, and the moon fled to the southern hemisphere.

Magno de Rimi presented himself before his wife. "I am going to kill him," said he. "You will wait here. I am merciful, and leave you to your son. You will not see me till the day when I come to pronounce sentence upon you. Pray to God that he who dishonored me may kill me. That is the only way in which we can all be happy: I in dying, he in coming to seek you; you in leaving this rock where I have buried you alive. You see that I confide our cause and our fate to the *judgment of God*, who knows everything and can order everything as He pleases. Adieu, woman, whom I have loved so deeply. Adieu, my Fœdora."

On the following day he sailed for Langoe in the "Thor," a fishing brigantine, which was the only means of communication between the island of Loppen and the rest of the world.

Fœdora, who had neither spoken nor sighed for many months, went up to the platform of the castle to witness the departure of the terrible embarkation, which carried in its bosom the secret of her future. She kissed her son and went back to her own rooms to wait there for her lover, and to receive from him life, love, and liberty, or for the return of her husband, who would bring death to her and her son.

VIII.

It was the night of the 25th of April. The cold was intense, and the aurora borealis had set everything on fire with its mysterious brilliancy. The island of Langoe was as silent as the grave. The two rivals must have met already.

On the steepest part of the coast arose a colossal dolman, remains of the accursed altars on which the Scandinavians had offered unto Odin their bloody worship.

The magnificent and brilliant moon of that region, where the sun is so pale and melancholy, shed its soft splendor on those ruins. By its bright light one could see two men clad in loose tunics of ermine girded round the waist. One was seated on an uprooted beech-tree, the other was leaning on the ancient dolman. They seemed to be two white phantoms, two ghosts of the victims immolated on those rocks in honor of the Scandinavian deities. The one sitting down was Alfonso de Haro, the one standing was Magno de Rimi. Each had a naked sword at his feet. They had been speaking, but now they were silent. Both were panting from the violence with which they had been fighting. Both were still unhurt; the struggle had been equal; in three hours of mortal combat neither had yielded an inch.

Alfonso arose. A ray of light illuminated his pale face, his black eyes shot flames of fire. "Let us try again," said he.

"Let us try with the left hand," said Magno.

They put themselves once more in posture, and the combat began again with unheard-of fury. The blades crossed each other and whistled and shone in the air like two silver serpents; the quick drawing of their breath seemed like the roaring of two lions; the blows rained down with supernatural rapidity, but always on the sword of the adversary. The sparks flew from the blades as if they were fireworks. Useless fight. Both gladiators were worthy of ancient Rome.

"Enough!" cried they both at once, and their swords fell together to the ground. Their hands could no longer hold them. They wished to throw themselves one on the other and have a wrestling match, but both were so tired that their knees bent under them and they fell to the ground like two inert masses.

"God does not wish either of us to die," said Alfonso, roaring like a dying bull.

"And yet the world cannot contain us both at once," replied Magno de Rimi, with a faltering voice.

"I give you my life for hers," said the Spaniard, picking up his sword and handing it to the Norwegian.

"Her life is neither yours nor mine; it depends upon the will of God. If you wish her to live you must kill me."

"Then let us begin again!" cried De Haro, gnashing his teeth.

"No; it would be useless," replied Magno; "but we have still one resource."

"Which?"

"To begin another kind of duel."

"Describe it. I accept at once."

"My whole race against yours; your Spaniards against my Scandinavians. Your schooner against my brigantine,—in one word, war."

"When?"

"To-morrow."

"Where?"

"In front of the Cape of Rimia."

"You have my word."

"I will not fail."

"Day is dawning."

IX.

The sun was nearing the horizon.

The "Thor," Magno de Rimi's brigantine, and the "Finisterre," commanded by Don Alfonso de Haro, were both pierced with shot and resounded with the cries, "The grappling-irons! the grappling-irons!"

The two nobles were covered with wounds. A furious tempest added its horrors to those of the battle. All manœuvring was impossible. The wind driving them towards the south, seemed to favor the combatants' desire to continue the fight hand to hand.

Night came on; the storm had not abated; the vessels flew forward like arrows. At last the rival bands met with a frightful noise. A horrible butchery began.

Alfonso de Haro jumped on board the "Thor," sword in

hand, while Magno de Rimi was seeking him on the "Finisterre." In a few moments they met. The different nature of their wounds, and the jumps and thumps of the vessels, might then perhaps have decided the combat.

At this moment there was a terrible cry, fearful, sepulchral, arising from a hundred throats paralyzed by fear, and reaching even to the two heroes.

"The maelstrom!"

All repeated this frightful word, all threw away their arms; there was no longer either friend or foe. In the distance was heard a roaring overpowering even the horrors of the tempest.

"The maelstrom!" repeated both bodies of sailors, and they tried to bring the prows of the vessels round to the north.

It was too late!

"What is the maelstrom?" asked a young Spaniard, who did not know those seas, of an old man who was on his knees praying.

"The maelstrom," replied the old man, "is a whirlpool with a whirlwind and abyss, a tomb opened by God in this part of the ocean. The maelstrom is a boa-constrictor which looks at us, fascinates us, attracts us, and devours us. It is a monster showing us his teeth, a hell showing us his fiery throat. Do you not hear him roaring? Useless are the sails, useless the rudder, useless the oars. Kneel down and pray as I have done, for the maelstrom is death."

He spoke and jumped into the sea. Others imitated him. Magno and Alfonso looked at each other in silence. At times they turned their eyes towards the island of Loppen. Both thought of *Fœdora*.

The roar of the whirlpool became every moment more distinct. The sea was black and thick and dull, like a sheet of lead. The wind had suddenly lulled, and yet the two boats, bound by grappling-irons, travelled with frightful rapidity, such is the attraction of the unavoidable abyss. They were still at the distance of one league.

The two nobles, struck suddenly by the same thought, held out their hands to each other, went to the poop of the "Finisterre" and jumped into the sea. Those left on the two boats were screaming or howling or weeping or praying. They had come together to die.

Two minutes later the "Thor" and the "Finisterre" were

thrown one against the other, and their fragments and the bodies of seventy men, with their prayers, their cries, and their blasphemies, were swallowed up together by the insatiable monster.

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X.

Fædora lived, we don't know how long, on the island of Loppen, buried alive in that tomb of ice awaiting the arrival of Alfonso, and with him liberty and love, or the return of her husband, which would be the signal of her death. She must have died soon, exhausted by that solitude, that uncertainty, the horrible doubt which was never solved.

Her son, the child with the *black eyes*, passed his life also in that prison. Neither do we know the time of his death.

VIII

NO HAPPINESS WITHOUT VIRTUE.

A DRAMA IN THREE ACTS.

BY T. S. VAN DOOSSELAËVE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DUTCH (HOLLANDISH)

BY MRS. FRANCES C. HENDERSON.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

MATILDA, *an orphan, eighteen years old.*

WILLIAM, *house-painter, twenty-five years old.*

VAN ENGELEN, *member of the College of Overseers of the Poor, forty years old.*

MAKINSON, *a rich English lord, forty-eight years old.*

SCHROK, *landlord.*

FRANK, *VAN ENGELEN's servant.*

MARIA, *chambermaid at LORD MAKINSON's.*

Some friends of MR. VAN ENGELEN.

The PLOT is laid in a large town in Belgium.

FIRST ACT.

The stage represents a poorly-furnished room; a door is in the background; to the left of the spectator is a door opening upon a hack staircase; to the right is MATILDA's bedroom; to the left is a small table, on which is a work-box; a closet is in the background. (It is eight o'clock in the morning.)

FIRST SCENE.

WILLIAM. [*Pokes his head through the door in the background; seeing no one, he enters.*] Matilda is not here. So

much the better. I do not know how it is, when I don't see her I form a dozen plans for declaring my love to her, and all goes on swimmingly, but when I am with her all my castles in the air are overturned. Now, now, I think I shall yet carry it through. She will surely not reject my proposal. My aim is pure; I wish to marry her, and once married I will work day and night to bring up our children; that is, of course, if we have any. But I feel anxious about one thing,—to be sure, I have as yet no right,—Is she an orphan or is she an illegitimate child? And if she were, can *she* help it? Is that a reason why I should not love her? The unfortunate children are not to blame for their own birth. In a word, she is good, industrious, handsome, and young; what can one want more? She is poor, very poor, that is true, although she tries to hide it. If I could only help her without her knowing it! Let me think where I could put these two five-franc pieces. [*He reflects.*] I have an idea; I will put them in her work-basket. [*He puts the money in the basket.*] She will never know who put them there; but she will bless the hand that helped her secretly, and the blessings of the unfortunate bring us happiness. [*He listens.*] I hear some one coming up the steps. It is Mr. Schrok, our merciful landlord; he is certainly coming to torment Miss Matilda to pay her rent. How I should like to throw this grasping usurer out of the window! I must put her basket in the closet. [*He puts the basket in the closet.*]

SECOND SCENE.

WILLIAM *by the closet*; SCHROK *comes in and sees him busy at the closet, and stands on one side to watch.*

WILLIAM. [*Joyfully to SCHROK.*] Good-day, Mr. Schrok; what procures us the pleasure of seeing you so high up in your house? It must be some weighty reason, or you would not leave your money-bags.

SCHROK. [*Aside.*] What can he have been putting in that closet? [*Aloud.*] Laugh, young man, laugh; you may be old yourself some day.

WILLIAM. May heaven grant it! But I hope I shall not be such a miser as you are.

SCHROK. There is no disgrace in saving. But when I

climb so high, it is not to hide something in the closet of a young girl.

WILLIAM. [*Aside.*] The old spy sees everything. [*Aloud.*] Well, what harm is there in it? I borrowed a needle to sew a button on my jacket, and now I have put it back.

SCHROK. And I, I came to see if I can get what she is owing me for rent.

WILLIAM. [*Aside.*] I must try to get him away from here. [*Aloud.*] Mr. Schrok, I am not superstitious, but this morning, when I got up, I saw a spider; then I remembered what my mother often told me.

SCHROK. And what was that?

WILLIAM. "Boy," said she to me, "when you see a spider in the morning, it means distress, at mid-day good luck, and in the evening love."

SCHROK. And how does that suit here?

WILLIAM. [*Laughing.*] Distress, that is you. Will you take a bite, old fellow?

SCHROK. Insolent buffoon!

WILLIAM. Come, come, old fellow, don't let us quarrel. Come and I will give you a drop close by; does that suit you?

SCHROK. At my age one does not refuse such an offer.

WILLIAM. Well, then, forward march! [*They go out through the door to the left.*]

THIRD SCENE.

MATILDA. [*Comes in through the door in the background; she is neatly dressed, and throws off her shawl.*] Will misfortune never cease persecuting me? Everything is against me. Oh, my God! what have I done that thou dost chastise me so severely? must I suffer for the thoughtlessness of my parents? Oh, mother, who watchest over me from heaven, do not take this as a reproach! it is not you who were to blame as much as he who caused your ruin. No, it is no reproach to you I am making, but to him who induced you to leave your home, and then left you to starve with your child. Oh, if my father knew how the world looks down upon his child, he would surely pity me! [*She leans upon the table in deep thought.*]

FOURTH SCENE.

MATILDA *by the table, WILLIAM coming in.* WILLIAM
with some bread and meat in his hand.

WILLIAM. [*Aside.*] She is alone ; good ! now I can speak of my love for her. [*Aloud.*] Good-morning, Miss Matilda.

MATILDA. [*Answering him.*] Good-morning, William.
[*She casts a longing look at the bread.*]

WILLIAM. [*Aside.*] She looks so sad, I can really not speak to her of love. [*Drawing nearer, he says aloud.*] Miss Matilda, it is really bold in me to come and disturb you at your work.

MATILDA. Not at all ; I have no work, for that very reason I came home. Sit down, my friend.

WILLIAM. [*Aside.*] Friend ! now I feel encouraged. [*Aloud.*] Matilda, can I help you ? will you not have my breakfast ? You are most heartily welcome to it. [*He offers her his breakfast.*]

MATILDA. [*Aside.*] What a good man ! [*Aloud.*] I thank you, I breakfasted with one of my friends.

WILLIAM. [*Aside.*] I know that is not true.

MATILDA. [*Aside.*] I am tormented by hunger. If I only dared accept his offer !

WILLIAM. [*He has laid his breakfast on the table and takes a chair, and sits down by MATILDA.*] Do you not think, Matilda, that when we are together the time seems much shorter, and the work goes on better than when one is alone and thinks of one's poverty ? Do you wish to remain alone always ?

MATILDA. [*Aside.*] What does he mean ? How he looks at me ! [*Aloud.*] I do not know why you should ask me that. Why should I not wish to be alone ? Should I wish to unite myself to any one I could give him nothing but my poverty.

WILLIAM. And your love, do you count that for nothing ? And then if we must work we could lighten each other's burden ; and when we love another is it not sweet, after the day's hard work, to come home at night and find a wife in whose bosom one can pour out all one's troubles ?

MATILDA. [*Deeply touched.*] Oh, yes, you are right ; but such happiness is not for me.

WILLIAM. [*Anxiously.*] How so?

MATILDA. My good friend, I have no name.

WILLIAM. [*Distressed.*] And if some one came who did not care if you had a name or not, who only asks you to love him, and that you should lead a blameless life, would you refuse that man, would you cast him off? Oh, speak, Matilda, speak! The man who loves you so deeply, who adores you, who wishes to share with you happiness and unhappiness is kneeling at your feet. [*He kneels.*] He is waiting for one single little word from you. Oh, Matilda, Matilda, grant his request! With you he can live, without you he must die.

MATILDA. [*Who has been much excited during WILLIAM'S speech, lifts her eyes to heaven, and exclaims.*] Mother, shall I?

WILLIAM. Matilda!

MATILDA. William! [*She throws herself into his arms. SCHROK comes in and sees WILLIAM kiss MATILDA; they jump up much embarrassed.*]

FIFTH SCENE.

WILLIAM, MATILDA, and SCHROK.

SCHROK. [*Laughing.*] Splendid, my friends; why do you not continue? Don't let me stop you. -I was young myself once, and know what that means; the only difference was that the young girls of my time were not fashion-plates as now, and that they did not encourage the addresses of a workingman one day and of a rich man the next.

MATILDA. [*Aside.*] Good heavens! Does he think that I listened to the gentleman who followed me home yesterday?

WILLIAM. [*Seizing SCHROK'S hand.*] What do you mean by that, sir?

SCHROK. Ei, ei, my good fellow, you will put my wrist out of joint. I do not mean anything. I simply made a remark; but if the shoe fits you—— My sole object in coming here was to ask if Miss Matilda can pay me.

MATILDA. I will go at once to the shop for which I work, and I hope to be able to pay you at least a part on my return.

SCHROK. Yes, I need my money.

MATILDA. [*Going towards WILLIAM*] William, my friend, we meet again.

WILLIAM. [*Coldly.*] Yes, we meet again.

MATILDA. [*Aside.*] How cool! Should he suspect me! Oh, my God, protect me! [*She goes.*]

SIXTH SCENE.

SCHROK and WILLIAM.

WILLIAM. [*Aside.*] She seemed embarrassed. Could I really be deceived in her? I must now try to find out. [*Aloud.*] Mr. Schrok, what you said just now about the young girls, does that include Matilda?

SCHROK. I do not say it does, and I do not say it don't. But one thing I will say. How can one wear *bottines* when one earns so little? The plain cap has been abandoned, and everything must be *à l'instar de Paris*, and in order to be able to follow the fashions the girls sell their souls to the devil, and of course they prefer the rich man.

WILLIAM. And you really believe that of Matilda! She works half the night.

SCHROK. Matilda! So, so! Work, work! I really do not know if I ought to tell you; but I have seen a man follow her the two last evenings. I cannot say positively if she speaks with him, but I suppose she does. [*Aside.*] A little slander, as Basilius says in the "Barber of Seville," and he will leave her. Then she will listen to Mr. Van Engelen. I must report to him at once. [*Aloud, imitating MATILDA.*] William, my friend, we shall meet again. Ha, ha, ha! [*He goes.*]

SEVENTH SCENE.

WILLIAM, alone.

WILLIAM. Matilda a flirt! She deceive me! Oh, no; that is impossible. And yet the gentleman who followed her! Well, can she prevent them? How many rascals does one not see who use their money to ruin young girls, deceiving them by fair promises? [*He meditates.*] But Matilda a flirt! Oh, jealousy, how you are wringing my poor heart! If I knew who it is who wants to rob me of her love I would trample him under my feet. Yes, you may be sure that where William loves he wants no partners, if he is a work-

man. But to deceive me so, and I who thought I read love in her eyes! [*He listens.*] I think I hear her. I will go, so that she may not see my perturbation. [*He wishes to go; but VAN ENGELLEN enters.*] Oh, Mr. Van Engelen, a good and benevolent man. What brings him here?

EIGHTH SCENE.

VAN ENGELLEN and WILLIAM.

VAN ENGELLEN. [*A little embarrassed.*] You here, William?

WILLIAM. Yes, sir; this is my lodging. I was just breakfasting.

VAN ENGELLEN. And in the mean time you come to chat a little with the young girl who also lives here. You know, friend William, that you have not finished the gilding in my drawing-room, and that I am expecting company.

WILLIAM. I know that, sir; and I was just going as you came in. But did you come after me, or did you also come to speak with Miss Matilda?

VAN ENGELLEN. [*Defiantly.*] What do you mean? I hope you don't think I have any bad designs?

WILLIAM. [*Embarrassed.*] Oh, no, sir! every one knows your exemplary life too well to suspect you of anything wrong. I merely wanted to know if you came to bring Matilda work or aid of any kind: in that case your trouble is useless.

VAN ENGELLEN. How is that?

WILLIAM. Mr. Schrok pretends that she is encouraging a rich man, and if that is the case she will certainly not need your assistance.

VAN ENGELLEN. That is possible. And if it should be true, shall I tell her anything for you?

WILLIAM. Oh, yes, sir; tell her that it is a sin, and one which renders her unworthy of the confidence of honest people. But *if* it was only the clatter of a bad tongue, oh! help her then, help her! Who can do it better than you,—you who are looked up to as a pattern of generosity and benevolence? Tell her that I shall always love her. Oh, God! my brain is turned; I do not know what I am saying or doing! No, she is not guilty; my heart assures me of that! [*He goes.*]

NINTH SCENE.

VAN ENGELLEN, *alone.*

VAN ENGELLEN. [*He looks around him, laughing.*] Ha, ha, ha! The fellow is crazy, to make me his confidant! Ha! Mr. Schrok, you have played your part well,—you know how to slander! William must not speak with her again; he must move out of here. And then, when she has no one to help her, will she still refuse my offer? Foolish girl! With what contemptuous words she ordered me off yesterday! A prince would scarcely have such a *tenue*, such pride! [*He leans his head against the back of a chair.*] Ha, ha, ha! the little witch keeps my hot head in a fever; she must be made to think that I love her sincerely. Come, come! I have won stiffer girls than you, without my good name being tarnished in the least. Matilda is poor, she already owes Mr. Schrok money: I will make him turn her out-of-doors. In the shop they have promised to give her no more work. The only one who could help her then is William. But what can he do? I have but to speak the word and he shall also be left without work. But yet I shall not have the imprudence to come here often. Oh, was not that noble in me, the benevolent man? Ha, ha, ha! how easy it is to hoodwink the world! But, hush! I hear some one. I had better go away for a moment. [*He goes through the door to the left.*]

TENTH SCENE.

MATILDA, *and afterwards* VAN ENGELLEN.

MATILDA. [*She falls powerless on a chair.*] Oh, my God! what is there left for me but to die? The woman who had always been so kind to me has refused to pay me, and would not give me any more work. I fell on my knees before the hard-hearted creature; I begged for a morsel of bread. I *begged* for that which was mine, for that which I had fairly earned, but she pushed me out of the door. [*She raises her eyes to heaven.*] Yes, mother, your child was turned out-of-doors as if she had been a thief! Oh, God, forgive me the horrible thought that crossed my mind!—for a moment I thought I would put an end to my life by jumping into the

river. I had just passed by the house of the poor-master of this district, the one who is said to do so much good. A crowd of poor women and children stood before his door; although they were all beggars, clothed in rags, I went in among them, and thought to get alms and to be able to satisfy my hunger, but the beggars hooted at me because I was so well dressed. My courage failed me and I came home. How shall I still my hunger? [*She sees the bread WILLIAM left on the table and seizes it greedily.*] What do I see? Bread! bread! [*She puts it to her mouth.* VAN ENGELÉN comes quietly in at the door, but stands aside.] But if William should come for it—it is his—what could I say to him? No, I cannot take it. [*She puts it back and eyes it sorrowfully.*] And yet, I am so hungry; I have eaten nothing since yesterday. Oh, God forgive me, if it is a theft! [*She takes the bread.* VAN ENGELÉN, who has been looking at her, now comes forward.]

VAN ENGELÉN. Matilda!

MATILDA. [*She is frightened and hides the bread.*] Who is there? [*She lays the bread on the table.*]

VAN ENGELÉN. [*Drawing nearer.*] Some one who loves you devotedly.

MATILDA. [*Turning round.*] You here, sir! always you. [*Fiercely.*] What do you want with me? Did you not understand me yesterday when I said that my hand and heart must go together, that I loved some one, and if I could not be his I would never belong to another?

VAN ENGELÉN. Matilda, reflect well. You are poor,—you must often go hungry to bed. If you will listen to my love the thorns shall become roses; silk shall replace this calico; you shall have servants, and your slightest wish shall be my law. Speak, Matilda, speak; dare I hope?

MATILDA. What could you hope for? nothing but my contempt! So you, the rich man, thought you had me already in your power. Because I am hungry, must I have lost all respect for virtue and receive you with open arms? No, sir, you have deceived yourself. Your expectations shall not be realized. I would rather die of hunger and want than accept your offer. Begone, I say! begone!

VAN ENGELÉN. It matters little if I go or stay, you are mine. Every one knows that I am in your room, and if any

one should come in and find us together your good name would certainly be lost.

MATILDA. Oh, horror! And have you forgotten that God sees you, and that he could punish you for trying to dishonor an innocent girl? Oh, sir! on my knees [*she kneels.*] I beg you to leave this room; there are so many girls handsomer than I who would perhaps accept your offer. For the love of heaven, leave this room!

VAN ENGELN. [*Gazing longingly at her. Aside.*] How beautiful she is! No, she shall not escape me.

MATILDA. [*Rising.*] Oh, thanks, sir! I see in your eyes that you are going to grant my request. You will not force me to curse you.

VAN ENGELN. [*Seizing her in his arms, passionately.*] You deceive yourself, adorable Matilda; I love you more than ever, and will have you by fair means or foul.

MATILDA. Let me go! [*She breaks loose. Some one knocks.*] Oh, sir! go, go! Do not let any one find you here. I entreat you, go!

VAN ENGELN. [*Laughing.*] Well, I will; but in which direction?

MATILDA. [*She runs to the door on the left.*] This way. Locked! [*She reflects.*] Truly, there is no other way. Come and hide in my bedroom. No one can see you there. [*Some one knocks again at the door in the background.*] If it were William! [*VAN ENGELN goes into her room, while she opens the door.*]

ELEVENTH SCENE.

SCHROK, MATILDA, and VAN ENGELN, in the cabinet.

SCHROK. [*Coming in.*] Miss Matilda, it took you a long time to open the door, and that surprises me the more that you are not in the habit of locking this door. [*Spying around.*] I thought I heard some one speaking with you.

MATILDA. [*Much embarrassed and always looking towards the cabinet.*] You are mistaken; you see that I am alone, quite alone; you know that no one comes here except William.

SCHROK. Yes, I said that to myself, and it would not be necessary to hide him. Ha!

MATILDA. [*Aside.*] Can he have noticed anything?

SCHROK. Well, well, that is none of my business. Every

man must shear his own sheep. But to come back to the business which brought me here. How is it now, miss; can you pay my little bill?

MATILDA. No, sir, I cannot. I have not received any money. Have patience one month still; I will try to get work elsewhere; I will work day and night to satisfy you. Have pity upon me!

SCHROK. Pity! A fine word, but one does not get on far with it: it is poor pay.

MATILDA. [*Takes his hand imploringly.*] Do not jeer at me, sir! Do you know what it is to suffer hunger? But, no; you do not. Your table is loaded. Well, I am hungry!

SCHROK. Ta, ta! The proverb says, "Complainers know no want, boasters have no bread."

MATILDA. Inhuman man!

SCHROK. I laugh at your insults! If you have no money you shall leave my house at once; besides that, you won't have much to carry; I shall keep your furniture as security for my rent. When I reckon the interest and the interest of the interest, I lose by it. All your things together are not worth twenty francs, and you owe more than that. [*He goes to the closet and opens it.*]

MATILDA. Good heavens! What is going to happen?

SCHROK. [*Brings a pocket-book out of the closet.*] A sealed pocket-book,—love-letters probably.

MATILDA. [*Runs frantically to SCHROK and snatches it away.*] Rascal! Don't touch it! It is my mother's last will.

SCHROK. [*Ridiculing her.*] It contains probably a beautiful inheritance. [*He throws out some linen.*] There, you can have your trash. [*He takes the work-basket in which WILLIAM had hidden the money and comes forward on the stage. Aside.*] Now I have found the borrowed needle which William had put back in the closet. [*Aloud.*] How is this, Miss Matilda? You say you have no money, and here in this basket are two splinter-new five-franc pieces! [*He looks at them.*] They are still from the Republic.

MATILDA. Money! I have money and I am dying of hunger! Sir, I do not know how that money came into my basket, but I swear that it does not belong to me.

SCHROK. [*Trying the pieces.*] They are not false. That is good money. If you don't know that you are unfortunate.

MATILDA. [*Aside.*] Could William have done it? But he has nothing to spare!

SCHROK. They could not have come here alone. [*Looking around.*] Ha! now I know. It must have come from yonder.

MATILDA. [*Aside.*] Ah, the hat! Now I am lost!

SCHROK. The money does not belong to you, and you do not know that hat! Yes, yes, Schrok is silly enough to believe that. But, miss, remember that your disorderly life can give my house a bad name. The owner of this hat must be hidden here. [*He takes a step towards MATILDA'S bedroom. She plants herself before the door and prevents his going in.*]

MATILDA. [*Defyingly.*] You shall not go in there! What right have you, sir, to act as spy upon my actions? Yes, there is some one hidden here, whom I hate, because he is a monster like yourself. Some one whom I know only through the contempt with which he inspires me. [*VAN ENGELEN bursts open the door and comes out on the stage.*]

TWELFTH SCENE.

The preceding, and VAN ENGELEN.

MATILDA. [*To VAN ENGELEN.*] Speak, sir! Tell this man that I have rejected your infamous proposals! That I only hid you to save my good name! Speak, sir.

VAN ENGELEN. Yes, Mr. Schrok, I am obliged to confess that Miss Matilda's conduct towards me, at least, has been blameless. [*With a meaning wink.*] One always protests in the beginning, that is usual. Is it not so?

SCHROK. We understand that; sunshine comes after a storm.

MATILDA. What do you mean? Have I sunk so low that you think I am yours?

VAN ENGELEN. [*Aside.*] I must dissemble. [*Aloud.*] Oh, no, dear Matilda! All that I have said was only to try you,—only to see if all is true that is said of your virtue and of your steadfastness. I wanted to prove you, and then come to your assistance.

SCHROK. Then the five-franc pieces came from you?

VAN ENGELEN. That is possible.

MATILDA. [*Doubtingly. Aside.*] Can that be the truth, or is it only deep cunning, to throw me off my guard?

SCHROK. [*Secretly to VAN ENGELN.*] She doubts your word. Tell her your name.

VAN ENGELN. Young girl, do you doubt me still? Here is my name. [*He gives her his card.*] This shall answer for me.

MATILDA. [*Reading.*] Good heaven, what do I see? Is this all true? You, Mr. Van Engeln, the refuge of the unfortunate! Oh, sir, forgive me! but I did not know you. Oh, my God, thanks, thanks! If this good angel helps me I shall no longer suffer from hunger.

VAN ENGELN. Matilda, you have nothing now to fear from me. Come to my house this afternoon and I will give you work.

MATILDA. Oh, you benevolent man! how can I show my gratitude? You have saved me from certain death. [*She falls on a chair panting for breath.*] Ah! air, air! I am suffocating! Gratitude has filled my heart to overflowing. Oh, William, William, will you not rejoice?

VAN ENGELN. [*To SCHROK.*] She is mine.

SCHROK. [*Laughing.*] The cat is in the well.

SECOND ACT.

The scene represents a richly-furnished room in VAN ENGELN'S house. Doors are on both sides, and a door in the back-ground. A window is to the right, to the left a table and chairs. A sword is lying on a chair to the left; books are on the table.

FIRST SCENE.

*When the curtain rises VAN ENGELN is sitting by the table.
He has an order on his breast.*

VAN ENGELN. [*Alone.*] Will Matilda come? Oh, yes; she thanked me so warmly when I promised her work! Gratitude shone in her eyes, and from gratitude to love there is but a step. She does not come. I am dying of impatience. How beautiful she is! how noble her bearing! Oh, Matilda, a devouring thirst for love is tormenting me! but one word from you can quench it. [*Reflecting.*] But if she should expose me? Oh, I shall take care of that. When

she is once here, she shall not leave the house till she has sworn not to betray me. And yet, who would believe her? Am I not known to be chastity personified? All I should have to do would be to say, She is slandering me because I refused her the help which she did not deserve. [*Some one rings the door-bell.*] Can it be she? Oh, no; no such good luck. I believe—ha, ha!—I believe I am really in love with her. [*He listens.*] No, it is not she. Now I am once more the respectable philanthropist.

SECOND SCENE.

VAN ENGELN; FRANK, *bringing a letter.*

FRANK. Here, sir, is a letter. The servant is waiting for an answer.

VAN ENGELN. [*Takes the letter and opens it.*] What do I see? Lord Makinson, who rescued me out of the Thames during my last voyage to London! And he is here! Frank, tell the man that I shall be delighted to see Lord Makinson. [*The servant goes.*]

THIRD SCENE.

VAN ENGELN, *alone.*

VAN ENGELN. So that he does not come when Matilda is here. That would be very unpleasant. I must read his letter. [*He reads.*]

“MY DEAR SIR,—I hope you have not forgotten the favor I asked you to do me when you left London?” [*Speaking.*] I have really forgotten all about it. [*Meditating.*] Oh, yes; I think I remember the story. Some girl whom he seduced more than eighteen years ago. As if it were worth while to think of that now! If he could find her he would make an honest woman of her! [*Laughing.*] One would be kept busy if one had to make honest women of all the deceived girls. I had thought I was doing him a service by not looking for the girl, and now I see he is coming to look for her himself. Well, I shall tell him all my researches proved fruitless. And now I must get ready to receive my adored one. [*He goes out of the second door to the left.*]

FOURTH SCENE.

WILLIAM and FRANK, both going along the background;
WILLIAM is carrying a painter's pot.

FRANK. Is your work done, William?

WILLIAM. Yes; and I am not sorry for it. I do not mean that Mr. Van Engelen is not a good gentleman to work for, but just now my nose itches.

FRANK. Well, well, we must not forget to eat, as the saying is. But see, if I were like you, I would go and take a drink. Well, friend William, you needn't get angry; you are as sober as a hermit. Come with me, for to-day we dare not fret; Mr. Van Engelen has just received a decoration.

WILLIAM. Yes, one more! How many of those new knights are there who could answer the question, if one asked them, where they *earned* their decorations? Not that I mean to say that Mr. Van Engelen has no merit, not at all; but—well—no more on that subject. Frank, I thank you for your offer; but I am only going to put on my coat, and then I am off with my pots and cloths.

FRANK. Well, if you won't, I can't force you. I must go to my master. When you have your things together you can go down this little staircase. Good-by, William. [*He goes.*]

FIFTH SCENE.

WILLIAM, alone.

WILLIAM. [*Thoughtfully.*] However I try I cannot throw off the idea that Matilda is faithless. It kept me from doing my work properly. Now, what can have induced Mr. Van Engelen to come to Matilda's room? Infernal jealousy! Do I not believe any longer in Mr. Van Engelen's benevolence? How stupid in me to worry myself about it! [*Some one rings.*] That is certainly the company, and here I stand as if I belonged to the family! This infernal love is the cause of it! I felt so sure of spending my life with Matilda. But there is no use in thinking about that now. [*He goes thoughtfully towards the background, and when he passes a window he stops to look out.*] There, that is like me, going off by the front door instead of down the little staircase. [*He*

looks out, but jumps back.] Good heavens! What do I see? Matilda here! Then what Schrok told me is true! I shall not go away till I see clear in this matter. I think I hear her. I will hide myself. Oh, women, women, what sufferings you cause us! [*He goes out through the door to the right.*]

SIXTH SCENE.

MATILDA; FRANK *coming along the background.*

FRANK. Please to wait here a minute, miss; I am going to call master. He will come presently. [*He goes out to the left.*]

SEVENTH SCENE.

MATILDA, *alone.*

MATILDA. [*Looking round.*] How fine everything is here! Mr. Van Engelen must be very rich. How I was deceived in him! But now that I know him my gratitude will be everlasting. Oh, my God, can you forgive an unfortunate being for having doubted your loving providence? But I have drank the cup of adversity to the very dregs. Oh, forgive me that I thought of cutting the thread of my life! But now I will throw off those sad remembrances and think only of this angel of mercy. He promised me work, and here, in this house, where I came this morning to beg, I shall now get the means of earning enough to satisfy my hunger. [*While she is speaking thus VAN ENGELLEN enters.*]

EIGHTH SCENE.

VAN ENGELLEN, MATILDA, and WILLIAM *in the cabinet to the right.*

MATILDA. Excuse me, sir, if I come at an inconvenient time. If I had known that you expected company I should never have been so bold as to come at this time.

VAN ENGELLEN. No excuse is necessary, my dear young lady; it is a great pleasure to be able to do a little good in this world. Sit down, adorable Matilda. [*He gives her a chair.*]

MATILDA. [*Aside.*] How he says that! Is he deceiving me? Oh, God protect me!

VAN ENGELÉN. [*Sits down by her.*] Lovely miss, do not be frightened at what I am going to say.

MATILDA. Am I to be so unfortunate as not to get the work for which I came here?

VAN ENGELÉN. That was only a pretext to draw you here to me. You despised me, you would not let me speak of my love, benevolence was my only resource. You believed me, you are here, and now, Matilda, you are in my power.

MATILDA. [*Indignantly.*] Have I heard aright? No, no; that is not possible! Can one use that holy word philanthropy for such base purposes? [*Beseechingly.*] Oh, sir, tell me that I have misunderstood you; that you are still only trying me, as you did this morning! Give me the work you promised me, so that I can, at least, earn enough to repay you your two five-franc pieces. Oh, give it to me and let me go! or—no, let me go so. I will seek work elsewhere, and sew my fingers off rather than remain indebted to you. [*She tries to go.*]

VAN ENGELÉN. [*Holding her back.*] Hear me, Matilda. If you go now your good name will none the less be lost! [*With emphasis.*] I am sure that Mr. Schrok has already told William that you are faithless to him, and that he at this very moment hates you worse than he loved you before.

WILLIAM. [*Who has been listening, and can scarcely contain himself.*] Villain! [*He hides himself quickly.*]

VAN ENGELÉN. [*Aside.*] Are we not alone? [*He goes to the door on the right, looks out, and locks it.*] No one! It is singular; I thought I heard some one speak. [*Aloud.*] You see, dearest, that nothing is left for you but to correspond to my love.

MATILDA. Sir, now I see through your rascally plans! You thought, Matilda is poor; she has nothing but her good name, we will tarnish that; she has a little furniture, that shall be taken to pay the arrears of rent; there is one heart which loves her devotedly and which she loves in return, to him she shall be shown as the mistress of a rich man; and then, when nothing is left to her, she shall be obliged to sell her honor!

VAN ENGELÉN. You deceive yourself, Matilda.

MATILDA. I am not mistaken. Ha! you said, the girl is young and pretty, she must love finery; she has had an education such as seldom falls to the lot of girls of her class; she

does not like work. She shall have servants and gold. Is it not so?

VAN ENGELN. Collect yourself, Matilda; you are raving.

MATILDA. [*Defyingly.*] No, no! But what can I say to you? You have deceived me! You want a girl for your plaything,—a plaything that you can throw away when you are tired of it,—who will keep of all the luxury with which she was surrounded nothing,—nothing but her dishonored name. She may consider herself fortunate if she retains her beauty, so as to find an entrance into a house of shame. But I say *this* girl rejects your love. She may die of want, but she will never be anything but the lawful wife of an honest workman. And now, sir, let me out; I wish to go.

VAN ENGELN. [*Seizing her hand.*] Silly girl! do you think that when a wolf has a sheep under his paws it can slip off without losing some of its wool?

MATILDA. Unhand me, sir; unhand me!

VAN ENGELN. [*Passionately.*] Matilda, I love you unspeakably; nothing shall prevent me from making you mine. Do you hear? nothing! Your screams will avail you nothing; no one can come to your help. You shall be mine, if I have to use violence.

MATILDA. Oh, my God, help me, save me from this unprincipled man!

VAN ENGELN. [*Taking her round the waist.*] Come, Matilda; I will strew your path with flowers.

MATILDA. Monster! Do you not think that the anger of God can overtake you? Oh, sir, by your mother's memory, I pray you let me go!

VAN ENGELN. Your prayers are useless. You are mine. [*Some one knocks.*]

WILLIAM. [*Outside.*] Open the door! Open the door!

MATILDA. William's voice! I am saved! [*She runs to the door to the right.*]

VAN ENGELN. [*Furiously.*] Damnation! He must have heard everything. [*He takes up the sword which is lying on a chair.*] Stop, stop, Matilda, or it shall cost your lover his life!

MATILDA. [*Frightened, falls on her knees.*] Stop, stop! put down that murderous weapon. Yes, yes, I will obey you; but spare the life of him who would sacrifice it for my sake!—spare William!

WILLIAM. [*Outside, knocking furiously.*] Open the door, or I shall burst it open!

VAN ENGELN. [*Hurriedly to MATILDA.*] Well, come, hide yourself in this room. [*He throws away the sword and leads her to the bedroom. He shuts the door, locks it, and puts the key in his pocket. At that minute the door of the cabinet is burst open and WILLIAM rushes in. VAN ENGELN is standing by the table.*]

NINTH SCENE.

WILLIAM, VAN ENGELN, and MATILDA.

WILLIAM. [*Furiously.*] Where is she? Where is Matilda? Speak! I heard her voice!

VAN ENGELN. [*Quietly.*] Are you crazy, young man, or have you been drinking with my servants? You had better try to get home.

WILLIAM. I almost think I am crazy; but no, there is no craziness here. I am sure I heard Matilda call for help. Tell me, did I not hear her?

VAN ENGELN. [*Crossly.*] Well, yes; Matilda was here. She came here just as I went to her this morning. She prayed for help, and I have promised her help; and now,—now she has gone away.

WILLIAM. [*Doubtingly.*] Gone! gone! And why was she begging for me?

VAN ENGELN. I wanted to see if she really loved you, and I told her that if I saw her speaking to you you should lose your work. But, be tranquil, William; you may be quite certain that you only shall have her. [*He laughs.*] Ha, ha, ha!

WILLIAM. But, sir!

VAN ENGELN. [*Turning round suddenly.*] Is this questioning never to have an end, or am I standing here before a police inspector? Begone, or I will throw you out of the window!

WILLIAM. [*Sorrowfully.*] Oh, no! One catches a thief, one throws a rascal out of the window, but to insult an honest workman is the act of a rascal.

VAN ENGELN. What do you mean?

WILLIAM. That *you* would not wish to act like a rascal; you who are honored by all for your benevolence. And now,

sir, I shall go; but woe to you if any harm happens to Matilda through you! [*He takes a few steps towards the door in the background, when he hears a cry for help.*]

MATILDA. [*In the chamber to the left.*] William, save me, save me!

VAN ENGELÉN. [*Aside.*] Damnation! I am lost.

WILLIAM. [*Comes forward and lays his hand upon VAN ENGELÉN'S shoulder.*] She has not gone, sir; she is there. [*He points to the left.*] So you wished to attain your end by violence, and to satisfy your evil desires you were trying to prevent me from making her my wife.

VAN ENGELÉN. [*Decidedly.*] Well, yes, Matilda is still here; she is in that room; but before you shall go in to her I will run you through with this sword. There is nothing from which I would shrink to make her mine. [*He stands before the door of the room.*]

WILLIAM. [*With a choking voice.*] Love! Oh, do not speak of love! It is only pure hearts that should speak of love.

VAN ENGELÉN. [*Furiously.*] Enough, enough!

WILLIAM. Your whole life is hypocrisy, and it is through your hypocrisy that you have obtained your decoration. Have you deserved it? Speak! No; you have not deserved it. That cross does you no honor; it is a mark of the shame which should brand you on the breast.

VAN ENGELÉN. This impudent speech shall cost you your life. [*VAN ENGELÉN has taken the sword and is trying to get near WILLIAM, who has seized a chair with which to ward off his attack. The door in the background is opened forcibly, LORD MAKINSON and other gentlemen enter and throw themselves between the combatants.*]

TENTH SCENE.

The preceding, LORD MAKINSON, some friends of VAN ENGELÉN, and FRANK.

MAKINSON. [*Throwing himself between them.*] What are you doing, my friends?

VAN ENGELÉN. I am trying to punish this miserable creature for the insults he has offered me. [*They disarm him.*]

WILLIAM. Let the young gentleman come on. I know how to use my hands.

MAKINSON. [*To VAN ENGELEN.*] Edward, let me act as mediator between you and this young man; you know that my only source of happiness is in helping the unfortunate.

WILLIAM. Sir, if that is true, tell this hypocrite to set free the young girl whom he wishes to seduce.

MAKINSON. Have I heard aright, Edward? Oh, this rends the bonds of friendship between us!

VAN ENGELEN. Can you believe such tales?

MAKINSON. Any one who speaks so straightforwardly must be telling the truth. Do you know what remorse such a deed occasions? I also sinned once, and heaven alone knows what tortures I have suffered.

VAN ENGELEN. [*Impatiently.*] But, sir.

MAKINSON. Do you think it is honorable in us rich men to treat the working classes as slaves?

VAN ENGELEN. [*Disturbed.*] Sir, you go too far, and you are indebted to the gratitude I owe you for the peaceable issue of this conversation.

MAKINSON. A duel you would have? Silly men who murder each other in cold blood for a so-called *point of honor*! And now, sir, if you do feel the gratitude of which you speak, I beg you in its name to give the young girl back to her friend here.

VAN ENGELEN. [*Aside.*] Oh, I shall have my revenge! [*Aloud.*] Frank, bring the young girl out of my room. [*He gives him the key. FRANK goes.*]

WILLIAM. [*Joyfully.*] Oh, Matilda, I shall see you again, unhurt, and can now protect you with my respectful love!

VAN ENGELEN. [*Aside.*] She shall yet be mine.

ELEVENTH SCENE.

The preceding, and MATILDA, who has fainted. FRANK places her upon a chair.

WILLIAM. [*Screams.*] Matilda! dead!

VAN ENGELEN. Is it possible?

FRANK. She has only fainted.

WILLIAM. [*Kneeling by her.*] Matilda, come to yourself, you have nothing more to fear: there is a noble man here who has undertaken to protect you.

[MAKINSON *has drawn near, and looks at MATILDA with emotion.*]

MAKINSON. [*Aside.*] Good heavens! what do I see? What a likeness! Can it be possible?

WILLIAM. She is coming to.

MAKINSON. [*To MATILDA.*] My dear child, be comforted, you are here with friends.

VAN ENGELLEN. [*To one of his friends.*] How beautiful she is, even in a fainting fit!

MATILDA. [*Coming to herself sees WILLIAM at her feet.*] William, my preserver!

WILLIAM. [*Rising.*] Matilda, it is not I, but this kind gentleman. [*He points to MAKINSON.*]

MATILDA. [*Rises with difficulty, gazes for a moment vacantly around, and then throws herself into MAKINSON'S arms.*] Protect us, sir; protect us against the persecution of this scoundrel! [*She points to VAN ENGELLEN, who laughs.*]

MAKINSON. [*Raising his eyes to heaven. Aside.*] Can it be the voice of nature speaking to her? [*Aloud.*] Gentlemen, I take this girl under my protection. . [*To MATILDA and WILLIAM.*] And now, my children, let us leave a house where I had expected to find a philanthropist, but where I have discovered a libertine. [*They depart.*]

VAN ENGELLEN. [*To his friends, with assumed indifference.*] My friends, do not let this little episode interfere with our enjoyment of a social hour. [*Aside.*] I shall revenge myself later.

THIRD ACT.

A room in MAKINSON'S house. Balcony in the background; doors to the right and left. The first door opens into MATILDA'S chamber.

FIRST SCENE.

MARIA and FRANK are arranging the room; FRANK tries to kiss MARIA, and runs after her.

MARIA. Frank, will you let me do my work?

FRANK. I am not hindering you, my dear; I only ask to be allowed to leave a kiss on your blooming cheeks, and you won't let me.

MARIA. No, deceiver ; I will not let you, because I have good reasons, excellent reasons.

FRANK. And may one know what those reasons are, Miss Pert ?

MARIA. Why, that I will not have any man for my lover who kisses the scullion also ! Have you heard ?

FRANK. [*Aside.*] Jealousy ! so much the better. [*Aloud.*] Well, I don't deny that I kissed her. Is it my fault if all the women are crazy for me ? It is as if I had a talisman in my pocket which brings luck, as the saying is. [*While he is talking FRANK has quietly drawn near to MARIA, and tries to kiss her, but she gives him a box on the ears.*] Ah ! you fight, Maria !

MARIA. It is to punish your cursed impudence.

FRANK. Now I will have a kiss if the devil holds the stakes. [*He runs after her and kisses her.*] Now, you've caught it.

MARIA. Frank, I won't have that again. I do not love you. I like William much better.

FRANK. [*Laughing.*] You love William, do you ? That is funny. And has he ever spoken to you of love ?

MARIA. Not a single word.

FRANK. My child, I think you have reckoned without your host.

MARIA. How so ?

FRANK. Why, can't you see that he is in love with Miss Matilda ? He must be dreadfully in love, as he, a poor workman, was not afraid to brave the anger of my rich master.

MARIA. That is true ; well, I won't think of him any more.

FRANK. And now you see you must walk a chalk line, as the proverb says, and you had better make me the owner of that feeling heart ; will you not, my darling ?

MARIA. Oh, I like you well enough, and now that I see I can't get William, I would rather take you than a worse one.

FRANK. That is very kind of you. I am much obliged for the preference ; but no more jealousy.

MARIA. And you must not kiss any more scullions.

FRANK. No, only you ; and here is a beginning. [*He kisses her.*]

MARIA. [*Laughing.*] You feel very safe already ; but while we are chattering you forgot to bring Miss Matilda out of the

garden where she is taking an airing. Till we meet again, dear Frank.

FRANK. Till we meet again, my turtle-dove.

SECOND SCENE.

FRANK, *alone*.

FRANK. Frank, Frank, you are a bad man. You know very well you have learnt this loose life from your master. And yet you must not think that when you render your account at the judgment-seat it will be enough to say, Like master, like servant! Mr. Van Engelen said to me, "Frank, you can earn a great deal of money if you will serve me faithfully;" and I, who love money better than blows any day, answered that I would be zealous in any service. He then said, "You must go and offer yourself as servant to Lord Makinson." That did not seem hard work, as it is always easy enough to deceive honest people. So I came to this rich lord, who has been living here for the last twelve days, and told him that my master had sent me away because I had taken William into his room. The good man believed me, and engaged me instantly. This is a good way to get rich. I am earning money on both sides. Every day Schrok comes, feigning remorse, to inquire after Matilda's health; and then he goes and reports to Mr. Van Engelen. And I, as a pastime, make love to the maids in my leisure hours. But, still, there she is, with Matilda. When you speak of the fox you see his bush.

THIRD SCENE.

MATILDA, MARIA, *and* FRANK.

MATILDA. [*Supported by MARIA, sits down by the table.*] How much trouble you take for me, my friends! Oh, I hope to be able some day to reward you!

MARIA. You need not reward us, as Lord Makinson pays us to obey his orders, and these are to treat you with the tenderest care.

MATILDA. The good man! Is he not at home? I have not seen him to-day. I hope he is not indisposed.

FRANK. Oh! no; he will soon be here. I hope you are better to-day, miss.

MATILDA. Oh, much better! But, my friend, did not Mr. Van Engelen send you away on my account?

FRANK. Yes.

MATILDA. But you forgive me?

FRANK. And why not? I have not lost by it.

MATILDA. My friends, do not let me interrupt your work. If William or your master comes, tell him I am here. [*Both go away.*]

FOURTH SCENE.

MATILDA, *alone.*

MATILDA. Oh, my God, who never forsakest those who put their trust in thee, give me now the strength to take the most important step in my life. To-day I have completed my eighteenth year, and, according to the will of my dying mother, to-day I must open the portfolio which she gave me a few moments before she drew her last breath. Honored mother, shall I there find the details of all your struggles to bring me up, to give me a good education? But, however much I wish to open it, I will not do it until I am alone in my own room with my mother's memory.

FIFTH SCENE.

MATILDA and WILLIAM.

MATILDA. [*Turns round and sees WILLIAM.*] You there, my friend?

WILLIAM. My beloved Matilda, what a pleasure to see your health improve daily! Thank God, we need now have no uneasiness. Nature and good nursing have conquered the disease which threatened to rob me of my dearest treasure.

MATILDA. My good William!

WILLIAM. My dear Matilda, you have suffered much; but you have the blessed consciousness of having done nothing wrong. But I,—I did you wrong in my heart. I doubted your faith. Can you forgive me?

MATILDA. And you could doubt me! But how could it be otherwise? They left no means untried to corrupt me.

They even tried to buy me. They even hid money in my workbox.

WILLIAM. What do you say, Matilda? I hope they did not take the credit of doing so!

MATILDA. Oh, yes. Mr. Van Engelen acknowledged that he had put it there.

WILLIAM. The rascal! Matilda, it did not come from him, but from me! I did not dare offer it to you, so I hid it.

MATILDA. You, William! How long you must have had to save to get it! Now I see better than ever that you love me.

WILLIAM. Yes; but it was no longer any love when I saw you come in to Mr. Van Engelen's; then I felt convinced that you were as black as you had been painted to me. Tormented by jealousy, I determined to act the spy upon you. Will you believe now that I suffered as much as you? But the first word that you spoke showed me how I had been deceived, and now I love you more than ever.

MATILDA. And I, William, ought I not to love you? Have I not seen your anxiety, while I was so ill, while you stood by my bed looking at me with such sorrowful eyes?

WILLIAM. Yes, for three nights and days you hung between life and death, and Lord Makinson could not have watched over you more tenderly if you had been his own daughter.

MATILDA. To you, William, I can devote my life; but what can I do for him?

WILLIAM. For him? We will give him everlasting gratitude, and let him enjoy the sight of our happiness. As soon as you are well enough we will get married, Matilda, if you will agree to it, and we will work hard to bring up our little ones as honest citizens. You blush, my angel, at the thought that you, as mother, see your children playing around you and running to meet their father when he comes from his work.

MATILDA. Your imagination makes the picture very bright, my friend; but see here, the other side: The workman is married, but his income does not increase with every child that God gives him, though his happiness does; and then if sickness strikes down the father of the family, misery comes in at the door. Oh, fearful must be the sufferings of the

mother who sees her children suffering want around her, who hears their cries for bread and cannot give it to them!

WILLIAM. Be comforted, my beloved; we will begin at once to put in the savings-bank for a rainy day.

SIXTH SCENE.

The preceding and MAKINSON.

MAKINSON. [*To MATILDA.*] I have inquired of every one, but no one can tell me anything about your birth or your name. God only knows how anxious I am to know your name. Are your parents still alive?

MATILDA. [*Weeping.*] My parents! My unfortunate mother has been dead for four years. My father I have never known; and my name,—I know it not. [*She rises from her seat.*]

MAKINSON. [*Deeply moved.*] One more question, only one. The locket you wear round your neck. [*He points to a locket MATILDA wears.*] Did you buy this?

MATILDA. [*Panting.*] It is the only memorial of better days which my mother retained.

WILLIAM. You are hot, Matilda; your fever will return; come and lie down for a while. [*He leads her into her room.*]

SEVENTH SCENE.

MAKINSON, *soon afterwards* WILLIAM.

MAKINSON. [*Thoughtfully, but with increasing agitation.*] I am going astray in my conjectures. She did not buy the locket. It belonged to her mother,—it remained to her from better days. Unfortunate!—and her mother is dead. Oh, torture! But the resemblance, does not this say enough? Oh, yes, she is my daughter! I have found my child! But I must not say anything yet that could excite her. I must have patience for a day or two, and then explain everything. [*To WILLIAM, who is coming in.*] You had better remain a while, William, as Matilda does not seem very well. Can you spare the time?

WILLIAM. Sir!

EIGHTH SCENE.

WILLIAM, *alone.*

WILLIAM. What can be the matter with Lord Makinson? he seemed quite overcome. I suppose it is simply his conversation with Matilda which is to blame for it. What an angel she is! every one takes a fancy to her. Oh, Matilda! how I long for the blessed hour which shall make us man and wife! With what pride shall I not go walking with you on Sunday! With what delight shall I not say to myself, That beautiful woman is my wife! For me she despised the offers of a rich man. [*He stops to listen.*] What is that? I hear some one speaking in that room. [*He goes to the first door to the right.*] Who can it be? It is Schrok's voice. I must conceal myself. [*He goes out softly through the second door to the right. In the mean time the stage has gradually become darker.*]

NINTH SCENE.

SCHROK, FRANK, and WILLIAM *in the room to the right.*

SCHROK. [*Low to FRANK.*] It is now twilight. Where is her room, Frank?

FRANK. There. [*He points to the left.*]

SCHROK. With that balcony? Splendid! The plan is well laid, and this time it cannot fail.

WILLIAM. [*In the room.*] We shall see.

[FRANK sneezes.]

SCHROK. What did you say?

FRANK. Nothing. I only sneezed.

SCHROK. So! Well, if you did not say anything, but only sneezed, then God bless you! But, do you hear, Frank? as soon as they have all gone to bed, you must come to this window and open it. Mr. Van Engelen will come along the garden. [*Looking around.*] But don't let us stay here any longer; I think I hear some one. If any one were to overhear us all would be lost. Come along, I will tell you the rest below. [*They go out at the same door through which they came in.*]

TENTH SCENE.

WILLIAM, *alone.*

WILLIAM. Have I heard aright? Van Engelen will force himself into this house! And I did not break old Schrok's neck for him! So much the better. It is Van Engelen I wish to punish.

ELEVENTH SCENE.

WILLIAM *and* MARIA, *with a light.*

WILLIAM. You come just at the right time, Maria; I want you to do me a favor.

MARIA. Speak, Mr. William, speak; what must I do?

WILLIAM. Matilda must remain here for a few moments; will you be so good as to call her, or if she is asleep, to wake her?

MARIA. But why should I wake her if she is asleep? She needs rest. Is it not better to let the light burn here, and when she wakes she can come and sit here as long as she pleases.

WILLIAM. Perhaps that will be the best, my good Maria. Light the taper in Matilda's room and go to bed. I must speak to your master before I go home. I shall wait for him with Frank.

MARIA. Good-night then, Mr. William.

WILLIAM. Sleep well, Maria.

MARIA. [*Aside in going out.*] He does not give me any kiss like Frank. [*She takes a night-light into MATILDA'S room, and goes.*]

TWELFTH SCENE.

WILLIAM, *alone.*

WILLIAM. I must write a note quickly, so that she shall not be frightened if she hears a noise. [*He writes.*] There, I will put it here by the light. Now I must secure the window and apprise Lord Makinson of everything. And then for you, Mr. Van Engelen, Matilda's persecutor. [*He fastens the window.*] I think I hear Matilda; I must go. [*He goes out of the second door to the left.*]

THIRTEENTH SCENE.

Soft music. FRANK comes in through the first door to the right, he has a rope-ladder in his hand, and, going by the table, he blows out the light. He opens the door on the balcony and makes the rope-ladder fast, shuts the door again, and goes off the way by which he came.

FOURTEENTH SCENE.

MATILDA, alone.

MATILDA. [*She carries a night-light, and is very pale.*] I thought I heard some one speak; I thought I heard William mention my name. I am surprised not to find him here. [*She puts the light on the table.*] How truly he loves me! My dear William, I now swear that whatever I may learn about my birth, I never will be the wife of any one but yourself. [*She lights the bougies.*] And now, mother, I must think only of you. [*She sits down and takes the letter which WILLIAM wrote.*] Good heaven! what do I read? What could frighten me? Let me read it again. [*She reads.*] "Whatever you may hear or see do not be frightened, we are watching over you." This is William's handwriting, but perhaps some one is trying again to deceive me. I must be on my guard. All is still; I only hear the wind rustling in the leaves in the garden. [*She gets up and looks around.*] I shudder involuntarily; my letter says fear nothing, and yet I am frightened. Oh, my God! support me while I open my letter. [*She opens the little portfolio she brought with her.*] A cloud comes over my sight. I can scarcely read the inscription: "To my daughter." [*She breaks the seal and reads.*]

"MY BELOVED MATILDA,—On the eve of appearing before my God, it is my duty to disclose to you the secret of my life. I was the daughter of a rich merchant in London. My father, James Butler, wishing me to get a finished education, placed me there in a fashionable boarding-school. I formed a warm friendship for a young girl of my own age. She had a brother about thirty years old, who was very fond of her and often came to see her. I was often present at these visits. I fell in love with Ernest. When we left school

I continued to see her and her brother. Having lost my mother early, I had no one to warn me of the danger I was incurring. Ernest declared his love and I did not reject it. This was my first step towards misery; one moment of forgetfulness of duty was sufficient to blast the happiness of my whole life. He promised me marriage, but his parents would not give their consent, as my father had lost a great deal of money by unfortunate speculations. 'My beloved Caroline,' said he, 'let us live on hope. God will not permit us to be separated.' But he was mistaken. His parents procured him an appointment in India. Weeping, he took leave of me never to see me again. My condition could not much longer be hidden from my father, and one day I was forced to acknowledge everything. His rage knew no bounds. He cursed me, and rushed from the house like a madman. My father's curse had broken my heart. I fell down in a fainting fit, and was for some time out of my mind. When I recovered my senses I was fatherless and poor. My father had drowned himself in the Thames, and everything had to be sold to pay his debts. All that remained to me was a few jewels and my clothes. I sold the jewels, retaining only the locket which I have begged you always to keep, and which your father, my Ernest, had given me." *[She puts the letter aside and takes the locket off her neck. She kisses it.]* Oh, mother! now it is doubly valuable to me. *[It falls from her hands.]* Oh, it is broken! *[She picks it up.]* What do I see?—a portrait! *[She gets up.]* The features seem familiar to me. *[Surprised.]* He, he could be my father! But, no, that is impossible; that would be too much happiness. *[A smothered scream is heard.]* Heavens! I hear a noise at the window. What can it be? *[She turns round, and sees VAN ENGELÉN at the window with a dagger in his hand. She screams.]*

FIFTEENTH SCENE.

MATILDA and VAN ENGELÉN; afterwards MAKINSON.

VAN ENGELÉN. Matilda!

MATILDA. You here, barefaced seducer?

VAN ENGELÉN. *[Earnestly.]* Matilda, time is precious! Tears and entreaties will avail you nothing. Nothing shall wrest you from me! I love you devotedly! *[He throws*

away the dagger and falls on his knees before her.] This is no pretence. A post-chaise is awaiting us. We will go to Italy and there spend our honeymoon. Come, Matilda, come!

MATILDA. [*Breaks loose from him as he is trying to carry her off. MAKINSON comes in unseen.*] Unhand me! the daughter of Caroline Butler will know how to defend herself!

MAKINSON. [*Aside.*] She is my child!

MATILDA. Oh, God! where can I find a place of refuge?

MAKINSON. [*Drawing near.*] On your father's heart!

MATILDA. [*Cries.*] My father! [*She stands a moment motionless. MAKINSON opens his arms.*]

MAKINSON. Matilda, you are my daughter! [MATILDA falls into her father's arms. WILLIAM has got up on the balcony; he is wounded.]

MATILDA. Father, beloved father!

SIXTEENTH SCENE.

The preceding; WILLIAM on the balcony.

WILLIAM. Her father! All is lost! [*He comes forward on the stage.*]

MATILDA. [*She has seen WILLIAM.*] No, no! You shall share my happiness! Is it not so, father?

MAKINSON. Yes, William, she shall be your wife, to reward you for having run into danger for her sake.

WILLIAM. [*To MAKINSON.*] Oh, thanks, thanks! And now one great deed more: forgiveness for this man. [*He points to VAN ENGELEN.*]

MAKINSON. [*To VAN ENGELEN.*] Well, sir, you wished to dishonor my child and to murder this brave young man, but you can depart unharmed.

VAN ENGELEN. [*With a forced laugh.*] Unharmed! Ha, ha, ha! [*He goes off the stage.*]

MATILDA. Now, dear mother, your daughter is happy.

MAKINSON. [*Standing between her and WILLIAM.*] My dear children, let us ever remember this great truth: There is no happiness without virtue. [MATILDA embraces her father.]

IX.
TAXES.

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS.

BY FRANZISKA KARPINSKY.

TRANSLATED FROM THE POLISH
BY MRS. FRANCES C. HENDERSON.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

MR. MILOSKI.
STATECKI, *a friend of MR. MILOSKI.*
GROZNICKI, *understarost.*
MATGORZATA, *wife of the understarost.*
SZYMON, *a villager.*
POLUSIA, *daughter of SZYMON.*
BARTECKI, *secretary of GROZNICKI.*

*The SCENE is laid in the understarost's farm, in the village of MR.
MILOSKI.*

FIRST ACT.

FIRST SCENE.

GROZNICKI *and* BARTECKI.

GROZNICKI. Bartecki, you do not know our master now? Young and old, all follow the French fashion and wear a high *frisure* over the whole head. I do not know that he speaks French so well, but he never talks about anything but money. He even suspected me once of having taken a bribe. It is true I am only a so-called secretary, but I look after my master's interests.

BARTECKI. What is our master always doing in Warsaw? Is he among the leaders, or is he one of the judges?

GROZNICKI. As if it were possible to relate all that our master does in Warsaw! He goes to church, to the general-governor's, to the opera, to routs, to the hunt, and so forth.

BARTECKI. To church and to the governor-general's is only what is right. But to the opera, to routs, to the hunts!

GROZNICKI. He wants to follow the fashion. That is the amusement for the gentry. Then our master is often invited out to dinner, and at such times he must have his carriage, and two footmen, and two chasseurs, and two hussars and a Moor, and another man to run by the carriage.

BARTECKI. Eight servants for one carriage! that must take a lot of money.

GROZNICKI. Pass for the carriage and its attendants; but I do not know how long the money will last. And that Moor don't work at all.

BARTECKI. And those two chasseurs, do they go about in Warsaw shooting?

GROZNICKI. They are only called chasseurs because they wear a chasseur's livery; but they do not even know how to shoot, unless it be a plate or a dish. He does not spend the whole year in Warsaw, and shooting is not allowed in the town, and they cost such lots of money. The infantry soldiers in Warsaw are badly clad and often wear shabby hats, but the chasseurs always look spick and span new.

BARTECKI. You say that our master goes to take dinner with his acquaintances. Does he never invite them to his house?

GROZNICKI. Oh, yes; he invites them very often. Indeed, they say that our master's dinners are the best that are given in Warsaw. But if a good deal goes into your mouth a good deal goes out of your pocket, and Mr. Statecki helps our master to get through his money.

BARTECKI. Who is this Mr. Statecki?

GROZNICKI. Mr. Statecki's grandfather was the heir to all these villages, and as they say the grandfather of Mr. Miloski got them from him in some unjust way, so our master, who has a very kind heart, insists upon Mr. Statecki's living with him. He has something of his own, but in Warsaw they do not consider him a gentleman, so he is glad to be with some one who is well known.

BARTECKI. What a pity that our master makes an intimate friend of him!

GROZNICKI. We may expect him in a few days. Let the register be ready by that time, so that the taxes and all dues may then be settled. In these days where there are so many rascals, there is not a better master than ours.

BARTECKI. All the serfs have been paying; but Szymon, who was always the first to pay, has not yet given a shilling.

GROZNICKI. Your favorite Polusia (Szymon's daughter) begged for favor. But I have sworn that if the money is not ready to-day the Tartar shall have a taste of him, without respect to his age. Go to him now and tell him I am waiting for him. [BARTECKI goes out.]

SECOND SCENE.

GROZNICKI and GROZNICKA, *his wife.*

GROZNICKA. What are you sitting here so idly for? And why do you look so cross?

GROZNICKI. Is it such a misfortune if I have been angry? All the serfs have paid up their taxes, and Szymon has not yet given in anything. His daughter has again been asking for a respite, but I have assured her that if all is not promptly paid he shall have a hundred lashes, without regard to his age.

GROZNICKA. A hundred lashes to Szymon! That would be his death. Have you sworn to murder him?

GROZNICKI. Oh, my lady! A man cannot be as tender-hearted as a girl. He will not hold out against that threat.

GROZNICKA. The peasant's skin is like the nobleman's. Better send him to prison, and let his beloved daughter stir round and get the money. She had better let some of the admirers whom she treats with such contempt pay the debt for them.

GROZNICKI. That is the daughter's duty, if she does not want her father to pay his taxes with his hide. She only lives for Szymon, and you advise me to send him to prison?

GROZNICKA. Yes; I want your Polusia away from the farm. If I were to die, in two months she would be Mrs. Understarost.

GROZNICKI. Margosia! What are you thinking about?

GROZNICKA. Rather say, what are you going to do?

GROZNICKI. I will show mercy at first.

GROZNICKA. And at last also.

THIRD SCENE.

GROZNICKI, GROZNICKA, and POLUSIA.

POLUSIA. Sir, my father is crying.

GROZNICKA. And why does his darling little daughter let him cry, when she pretends to love him so much?

GROZNICKI. My dear Margosia, what business is it of yours? Let him cry if he wants to. Polusia, what is your father crying about?

POLUSIA. Because your worship sent Bartecki to threaten him with a hundred lashes if he did not pay his dues. When my mother died he did not cry, but comforted me when I cried. As this is the first time I have seen my father cry, it must be that it is the greatest trouble he has yet had to bear. He told Bartecki it was not the pain he dreaded so much as the shame, as he had always been an honest man.

GROZNICKA. If you love your father as much as you say you should go out to service, and you can soon earn enough to pay his dues for him.

POLUSIA. As long as my father lives I will not leave him.

GROZNICKA. [*Seizes POLUSIA's hand, and says very earnestly.*] What else can you do, virtuous daughter, to have the dues ready in time? It is not your father you are thinking about, you only wish to spare yourself.

GROZNICKI. [*After POLUSIA has gone out.*] Margosia, how rude you were! While you were talking so to the girl my heart filled with pity, and you were trying to torture her.

GROZNICKA. You are very tender-hearted when Polusia is talking, and just now you wanted to lacerate the body of a seventy-year-old man.

GROZNICKI. I wanted to punish him to secure my master's dues, but Polusia has no concern at all in the matter. To punish the daughter for the father, that I could never agree to.

GROZNICKA. I feel so hot that I can scarcely see.

GROZNICKI. Margosia, are you going to begin again?

GROZNICKA. I have finished. I shall not say another word,

but I shall call Polusia, and write out a contract for her as servant on the farm.

FOURTH SCENE.

GROZNICKI, and later BARTECKI.

GROZNICKI. Is my wife crazy, to think I am in love with Polusia? Just as if I could not praise a good and pretty girl without being in love with her! It is true I have a liking for pretty faces, and Polusia is as good as she is pretty. [BARTECKI enters.] So, Bartrecki, Szymon is crying and your Polusia is sad.

BARTECKI. They are both crying; Polusia because she was scolded by Mrs. Groznicka.

GROZNICKI. I was angry myself with my wife, but there is no use in crying about it.

BARTECKI. I never cried so much as I have done just now. At first when your worship used to send me into the village to levy executions, the mothers and children would surround me to try to beg off their brothers and sisters, but I never gave way, for it never hurt me as this has done. When Polusia came home she fell on her father's neck crying, and he raised his eyes to heaven and begged God to take him to himself before this shame fell upon him in his old age. I cried with them. At last the father said, "You say you love my daughter. If you love her go and beg a further delay for me, for it will kill Polusia to see me whipped." So I ran here as fast as I could, [*he kneels before GROZNICKI*] and now I say have mercy, have mercy so that my Polusia may not die.

GROZNICKI. If you mean me to pay Szymon's dues out of my pocket, that I cannot do; and it would really be well to give that obstinate fellow a lesson.

BARTECKI. There is a way for everything. I love Polusia, and will love her as long as I live. I am willing to live on bread and water and work for her to my life's end. If your worship will send for Szymon and get his consent to my marriage with his Polusia, I will pay his dues out of my savings. I do not know what Szymon has against me, but now that he needs me he will certainly give his consent. So if your worship acts for me now, I will try always to give you satisfaction.

GROZNICKI. Run and call Szymon. [BARTECKI goes out.]

FIFTH SCENE.

GROZNICKI, *alone.*

GROZNICKI. Bartecki is in love in earnest, and Szymon would be very stupid if he refuses him. The old man is no longer able to work, and it will be a good thing for him to be taken care of. But then Polusia would always be on the farm, and my wife would be jealous of me and Bartecki of Polusia.

SIXTH SCENE.

GROZNICKI, SZYMON, *and afterwards* GROZNICKA.

SZYMON. I thought I had better come myself to your worship.

GROZNICKI. And how long will you be so negligent about your dues to our master? You have not paid anything, and I have lost all patience. So now I think I must try another argument. [*He shows him the knout.*]

SZYMON. The harvest was very bad this year, and I am old, and I ought not to pay as much taxes as heretofore.

GROZNICKI. We are not talking about what was or should be, but about what is. You owe the money; pay it.

SZYMON. I have not the money and cannot pay, but you will surely allow me to put an end to my life, and thus spare myself that shame?

GROZNICKI. It is not so easy to die as you seem to think. We have Russian police here, and it will not let any one take his own life. Marry off your daughter and let your son-in-law pay your taxes for you.

SZYMON. My Polusia is poor, and no one is going to marry her simply for her virtue.

GROZNICKI. You are mistaken. Bartecki wishes to marry your Polusia. He is a man of good, settled habits; he is clever and has had schooling; he knows how to read, write, and cipher. He will make a living. Your daughter will be happy, and Bartecki will settle your taxes for you.

SZYMON. I have already heard that Bartecki is smitten with my daughter, that he is steady, that he is clever, but——

GROZNICKI. What but? I took Bartecki without any but. He is a man that will never want bread.

SZYMON. I do not doubt it; but it is bitter bread that is moistened with the tears of the unfortunate.

GROZNICKI. How so?

SZYMON. Bartecki loves to oppress people, which shows that he has a bad heart. He is hated in the whole village, because he never shows any mercy, but proceeds at once to an execution.

GROZNICKI. Well, and what more?

SZYMON. It is true he has talent for reading and writing, but with so bad a heart as he has it would be better if he did not know how to write, and the village would be a good deal happier.

GROZNICKI. And what will Miss Szymon do now?

SZYMON. As she has done heretofore. I do not care much about myself, but I want to see my daughter happy.

GROZNICKI. And who is going to pay your taxes?

SZYMON. I am not going to pay them with my daughter's life-long unhappiness. If necessary I must give my own life for them, but not my daughter's.

GROZNICKI. How is this, peasant; do you brave me to my face?

SZYMON. My name is not peasant, but Szymon.

GROZNICKI. Blows, lashes, fetters, you deserve everything. Perhaps you will be a little more yielding when you have been a while in prison and in irons. [*He seizes SZYMON by the shoulder and pushes him into the next room, calling his people.*] Ho, ho! to prison with him, to prison, and lock him up well. [*Coming back alone.*] That is a curious fellow, poor but stubborn. An angel could not get along with him. To say he would not make his daughter unhappy by marrying her to Bartecki! Well, it is to be hoped he will have a little more sense when he has been in prison a while.

GROZNICKA. [*Rushing in.*] My love, my love, the lancer has arrived to announce our master!

GROZNICKI. Help me, help me! Nobody is ready in the village. Rush round, rush round! And, Margosia, put on your new slippers and your black cloak and gloves, and your hat on your head.

SECOND ACT.

FIRST SCENE.

MILOSKI, STATECKI, and GROZNICKI.

MILOSKI. How are you, Mr. Groznicki? Have you managed well? Have you plenty of money? But I do not need to ask, for every land-owner has money.

GROZNICKI. All seasons are not equally prosperous, and for our dues we have had to go begging.

MILOSKI. What is the use of your books and your columns and divisions and your translations into Latin, unless money flows in?

GROZNICKI. *Sic est*, Monseigneur.

MILOSKI. Did you read the whole letter? From here to town it was so hard to get an explanation, and our house-keeping suffered in consequence.

GROZNICKI. I hope you will convince yourself, by looking over my books, that I have managed as well as it was possible to do, and that I understand the nature and merits of the various farms as well as it is possible to do.

STATECKI. Mr. Groznicki, I think a country gentleman can learn to understand his estates better by looking at the fields themselves than by examining any one's books. Each field has its own peculiar physiognomy, and in each one a great treasure is hidden, which can only be secured by the industry of the laborers.

GROZNICKI. Thank God, I have never neglected my duty in any respect; and when the laborers do not perform theirs, I give them the knout.

STATECKI. The knout is a bad manager. It only makes the serfs bad and stubborn, and makes them hate their master. I do not deny that it may be necessary sometimes, but it is better to have as little to do with it as possible. They will always have respect enough for their master. I do not say that he ought to treat his subjects as brothers, but he certainly ought to be a father to them.

GROZNICKI. We know better than you, Mr. Philanthropist, how to keep the peace. If you allow the peasants to have their own way, thank you, sir, all is at an end.

STATECKI. So much the worse for us if we cannot make them happy.

MIŁOSKI. Let the matter rest, Mr. Groznicki, and let each one keep his own opinion.

SECOND SCENE.

MIŁOSKI and STATECKI.

MIŁOSKI. What are you quarrelling with my Groznicki for?

STATECKI. Because while he is talking of management he knows nothing. I like some one who acts out what he says. I have heard enough. I should like to see the results of his method.

MIŁOSKI. I have been assured that he understands managing an estate, and that he is very industrious; but he may be a little severe and harsh with the people, which I never wished any one to be on my estates.

STATECKI. Anybody can see that from his way of talking. It is common among our overseers, but the land-owners generally repudiate it. Do tell me how many serfs you have on your estates?

MIŁOSKI. I really do not know, as it is not on the inventory.

STATECKI. And that is the first thing that ought to have been done. In the number of the serfs and their increase is the great gain of the heirs of the land-owner. Therefore it is to the interest of the latter to make his serfs as happy and comfortable as possible.

MIŁOSKI. My dear Statecki, I see you are a true friend, and I will try to follow your advice.

THIRD SCENE.

The same and GROZNICKI, and GROZNICKA, with butter.

GROZNICKI. This is my wife, who wishes to offer the best wishes of herself and children.

MIŁOSKI. How long have you been married?

GROZNICKI. Just five years. I married a widow.

GROZNICKA. When I was fourteen years old I married my

first husband and lived with him two years, and I remained only one year a widow.

GROZNICKI. My wife is of a good family, *de domo* Malgorzata Bzepska, a *primo voto* ; she was a Pagromskin.

MILOSKI. Is she a good housekeeper ?

GROZNICKA. Just please to taste my butter, and no one makes as good linen as I. But here, look at my shirt.

STATECKI. How many cows do you milk on this farm ?

GROZNICKI. There are ten cows and five calves.

STATECKI. Have you good pasture-lands ?

GROZNICKI. We might keep more cows, but the commissioners only allowed us fifteen head.

MILOSKI. What persons are those standing before the window ?

GROZNICKI. Those are the farmers who have leases. They wish to welcome their master, and have brought small gifts.

MILOSKI. I do not want their gifts, but I want them to pay their rent punctually.

FOURTH SCENE.

GROZNICKI and GROZNICKA.

GROZNICKI. It was foolish in you, Margosia, to ask our master to look at the linen of your shirt. He did not like it.

GROZNICKA. Neither did he seem to take any interest in knowing that I was of the house of Bzepska.

GROZNICKI. And then that other gentleman who was asking about the cows ! [GROZNICKA goes away.]

FIFTH SCENE.

STATECKI and GROZNICKI ; afterwards POLUSIA.

STATECKI. Mr. Miloski has been speaking of you in the most flattering terms, and I can see by your conversation that you understand the business thoroughly, only I fear, and so does Mr. Miloski, that you are too severe with the serfs.

GROZNICKI. I can assure you that I never overstep the bounds of justice.

POLUSIA. [With her apron to her eyes.] Oh, how can I get into the prison where my poor father is confined for that

unhappy rent? Will Mr. Groznicki accept my little gift? It is all I have in the world,—a shirt, an apron, and a string of coral.

GROZNICKI. That is not worth much.

POLUSIA. I have only kept for myself this coarse shirt. I would give all my clothes if I had any for my poor father. [*She falls on her knees before GROZNICKI and says, weeping.*] Oh, Mr. Groznicki, set my poor father free! Remember that you are also a father.

GROZNICKI. Get up, Polusia, get up. I do not like that.

POLUSIA. [*Turns, on her knees still, to STATECKI.*] Mr. Philanthropist, you do not know me, but in me you see one who is unhappy. Let me find mercy in your heart. Beg Mr. Groznicki to set my poor father free.

STATECKI. Mr. Groznicki, for my sake grant her request, and give her father time still in which to pay his rent. I would like to do something for the poor in the village.

GROZNICKI. Rise, Polusia! Mr. Philanthropist, this is a good girl, the best in the whole village, and the most respected by all. [*STATECKI goes out.*]

SIXTH SCENE.

GROZNICKI and POLUSIA.

POLUSIA. At first I thought you would accept my little bundle of clothes, but as you do not care about it, I have nothing that I can give for my poor father.

GROZNICKI. It is Szymon who is owing me, not you, and I do not want this kind of payment.

POLUSIA. What kind, then? This is all I have.

GROZNICKI. Look here, Polusia. Bartecki was speaking with me about you. I mentioned it to Szymon, but he is hard-headed. Bartecki said he would pay his taxes and rent for him. Can you hope to get any one better? What do you say, Polusia?

POLUSIA. If my father objects there is no use in talking about it.

GROZNICKI. But who will ever love you as much as Bartecki does?

POLUSIA. Your worship must excuse me if I say I should be very unhappy with him.

GROZNICKI. But what objection can you possibly have to Bartecki?

POLUSIA. You have already had my father's answer, and I have nothing to say in the matter.

SEVENTH SCENE.

The same, MILOSKI, and STATECKI.

MILOSKI. Who is that girl?

GROZNICKI. She is the daughter of one of your farmers.

STATECKI. This is the girl about whose father I was speaking just now.

MILOSKI. Girl, what is your name?

POLUSIA. Apolonia.

MILOSKI. And your father's?

POLUSIA. Szymon.

MILOSKI. What is it you want?

POLUSIA. That my father may be let out of prison.

STATECKI. And why did not your father pay his rent?

POLUSIA. He paid always the first, but this year God gave no harvest. We have nothing. All that we had in the house lies now on that table.

GROZNICKI. Polusia, that is your own, take it back. I am sure your master will consent to wait for the rent.

POLUSIA. If master could only see how old and weak father is, he would surely have pity on him.

MILOSKI. Why do you always look on the ground, Polusia?

POLUSIA. I cannot bear to see the light so long as my father is in prison.

MILOSKI. Look at me, and I will go and let him out.

POLUSIA. [*Sobbing.*] Oh, do, or he will die in the prison!

MILOSKI. Mr. Groznicki, let Szymon out, and bring him here. Now, Polusia, be cheerful; I would like to see how your face looks when you are not crying. So pretty and good a girl deserves to be happy.

POLUSIA. [*Turning to STATECKI.*] Oh, sir, you were so good as to speak to master for us, we will feel almost as grateful to you as to him.

STATECKI. It is pleasure enough for me to be able to help any one who is poor but honest.

MILOSKI. And who is handsome besides.

POLUSIA. [*Wringing her hands.*] Oh, go to father! let him out! let me go to him!

MIŁOSKI. [*Taking her hand.*] Stay here, Polusia; he will be here in a moment.

POLUSIA. I love my father; he is all I have in the world.

MIŁOSKI. And do you really know what love is?

POLUSIA. Could I help loving my father, and he so good?

MIŁOSKI. You ought to love your father; but you might also love some one else.

POLUSIA. My father has told me that if I am to love any one, he must love him first, and then he will allow me to love him.

STATECKI. Your father may be happy if you wait for his permission.

EIGHTH SCENE.

The same, GROZNICKI, and SZYMON.

GROZNICKI. Here is Szymon, who has been let out according to your orders, sir.

POLUSIA. [*Running to her father and kissing him.*] Have I you again, dear father? Both these good gentlemen took pity on you.

MIŁOSKI. I have ordered my children to be set free that they may work for the payment of their debt to me. I will wait a while.

SZYMON. I thank you, master, I thank you. I will bless you as long as I live, and even in death.

STATECKI. You can feel easy in your mind now, Szymon, but you must be faithful to your merciful master. So all is settled.

SZYMON. You are both my gracious masters, but——

GROZNICKI. I have already told your daughter she can take her clothes home. She need not have brought them to pay this debt.

SZYMON. [*Kissing POLUSIA.*] Oh, my beloved daughter! You were willing to give your only shirt for me, to get me out of prison. Right, my child; virtue is a better ornament than your string of coral; with such sentiments you can never be really unhappy.

MIŁOSKI. And you, Szymon, may well be proud of your daughter.

POLUSIA. And I, sir, am so happy to have my dear father again. It is true we have only dry bread to eat, but when my father eats it with me, how good it tastes!

STATECKI. [*Aside.*] Oh, how little it costs to make people happy!

SZYMON. I have learnt that honest poverty is not unhappiness. But come, Polusia, let us go home, and take your things with you, as master allows it. We will work hard to satisfy his claim, but I see we will not be punished for what we could not do. [*They go off, bowing low.*]

MILOSKI. What an excellent girl! What sound good sense, and what a feeling heart!

STATECKI. And the father is evidently a very upright man.

GROZNICKI. If he were only not quite so proud. It is true he lives on very good terms with his neighbors, and in the quarrels in the village he always acts as peace-maker. And he always tells them that the taxes are not high, and they must try and have them ready.

STATECKI. The idea of putting such a man in prison! [*The CHEF DE CUISINE comes in and says, On a servi, Monseigneur. They go out together.*]

THIRD ACT.

FIRST SCENE.

MILOSKI and GROZNICKA.

MILOSKI. Mrs. Groznicka, would it be possible, do you think, to induce that girl to go to Warsaw?

GROZNICKA. The girl might perhaps be glad to go, but Szymon certainly would not.

MILOSKI. If Polusia is willing to go with me, I will bind myself in writing to provide for her father as long as he lives.

GROZNICKA. You do not know Szymon yet. He is so set upon virtue that he has brought his daughter up as carefully in that respect as if she were a lady, and he has instilled his own sentiments into her.

MILOSKI. Tell him that I only want to take Polusia to Warsaw because I think she is capable of receiving a finished education there. Tell him that I only want to secure his daughter's happiness. I will have her taught to ride, to dance,

to play on the piano, and she has so much natural sense that she can become a very cultivated woman, and need not remain in the misery in which they now live.

GROZNICKA. The only thing for you to do is to persuade Szymon to go along, for she would be so afraid he might die in her absence that she would not leave him.

MILOSKI. How ridiculous to have such scruples! But I can take my peasants to Warsaw with me if I choose. I dare say he would follow fast enough if I took Polusia.

GROZNICKA. If, sir, you wish to ruin her, would it not be better to give her to Bartecki?

MILOSKI. And who is this Bartecki?

GROZNICKA. He is my husband's secretary, and a very steady, industrious man. He loves Polusia, and has spoken to my husband about it. The old man and the girl are not willing; but if you say so it can be done.

MILOSKI. But I do not want Polusia to be Mrs. Bartecki; I mean to do better by her if her stupid father will let me. For that reason it would be better for her to be in the city. My dear Groznicka, if you can talk Polusia over you can count on my gratitude. In the mean time here is a trifle. [*He gives her money.*]

GROZNICKA. Thanks, sir; I prostrate myself at your feet.

MILOSKI. If you succeed you shall be well paid. [MILOSKI goes.]

SECOND SCENE.

GROZNICKA, *alone.*

GROZNICKA. [*She counts the gold pieces.*] Ten gold ducats! I do not see so much money in a whole year. What a good, kind master! What does it cost me to bring Polusia to him? He has assured me he only wishes to secure her happiness, so I am doing her a service. But first I must see Polusia. She will probably be thankful not to have to live any longer in that hut. I dare say she may show her gratitude when she is a great lady, and wears silk dresses and rides in a carriage with a footman behind her.

THIRD SCENE.

GROZNICKA and BARTECKI.

GROZNICKA. I think exactly he might be useful to me.

BARTECKI. If I can be of any use to you I am at your service.

GROZNICKA. The first thing to do is to send Polusia to me. But she is now on the farm; tell her to fetch some bread for the gentlemen. After that she must come to me, but her father must not hear a word about it.

BARTECKI. Oh, Mrs. Groznicka, do speak to Polusia for me! I have heard that our master has taken a great fancy to her, and I am so unhappy!

GROZNICKA. I dare say it is true, but do not be uneasy, just let me speak to her. [BARTECKI goes away.] Poor fellow! If he only knew for what I want Polusia. She must listen to our master. Of course she will refuse at first, but who can long refuse finery, good living, and adoration? I must only take care that he must use me as go-between, and not speak to her himself.

FOURTH SCENE.

GROZNICKA and POLUSIA.

GROZNICKA. How are you, Polusia? You are certainly happy now that your father is free. I have myself told our master that Szymon is honest but unfortunate, and has got poor. On that account master interfered and ordered him to be released from prison.

POLUSIA. I thank you that you spoke a good word for my father. And I will not think any more about your having tormented me so before, only we know that Mr. Groznicki spoke well of father.

GROZNICKA. So you think, so you think; and he loves your father, and is thinking about you also. If you were only wise, Polusia, you could be so happy.

POLUSIA. I would not marry Bartecki even if father wished me to.

GROZNICKA. You need not marry Bartecki; but what would you say to going to Warsaw?

POLUSIA. And how should I get to Warsaw? My father is not going there, and I have no horse.

GROZNICKA. But would you not like to go with some one else's horses?

POLUSIA. I won't go to Warsaw with Bartecki's horses.

GROZNICKA. I have already told you, my dear Polusia, that you need not have anything to do with Bartecki. Our master was praising you very highly to me, and then he said if the girl would like to learn to ride, to dance, and to play upon the piano, which would be a great piece of good luck for her and her father, I would take her to Warsaw and have her taught. Oh, Polusia! Polusia! how happy you will be!

POLUSIA. And could my father go with us to Warsaw?

GROZNICKA. And what would Szymon do in Warsaw? He don't want to get an education at his time of life.

POLUSIA. I will never go there without my father, even if the greatest happiness were awaiting me.

GROZNICKA. Our master, who loves you so well, would always provide for your father. He would make him an allowance, and Szymon need not work for his daily bread in his old age.

POLUSIA. A stranger's hands would never be as loving as mine.

GROZNICKA. Still, if your father had a pension he would enjoy a degree of comfort he has never known in his whole life. If you are sensible, my child, you will accept our master's offer.

FIFTH SCENE.

MIŁOSKI, GROZNICKA, and POLUSIA.

MIŁOSKI. What are you doing, Polusia?

POLUSIA. I came to bring some bread to the house, and then Mrs. Groznicka called me.

MIŁOSKI. Don't they make good bread in the house?

POLUSIA. To-morrow I ought to bake if I can, as I am housekeeper.

MIŁOSKI. Oh, you beautiful housekeeper! [*He takes her by both hands.*] I would rather suffer hunger than to let you bake bread for me. Ask Mrs. Groznicka what I think of you.

POLUSIA. [*Taking her hands away and looking down.*] I will not leave my father as long as he lives. I am his only comfort in his old age and his poverty. He must go with us, or he might die alone in my absence.

MIŁOSKI. You will be very happy in Warsaw, but your father would be very unhappy.

POLUSIA. I could never be happy anywhere if I were away from my father.

MILOSKI. [*Takes out money and gives it to POLUSIA.*] Here is money for you, only you must not let your father see it. You can pay his dues for him, and use the rest to provide comforts for your father.

POLUSIA. Why do you give me money which I have not earned?

GROZNICKA. Our master gives it to you for love, and you can keep it for love of him. [*POLUSIA refuses the money. He forces it into her hand.*]

MILOSKI. Well, my good child, are you ready to go to Warsaw?

POLUSIA. If my father were to order me to go, I must obey him.

GROZNICKA. A master is more than a father. Listen to your master, Polusia. [*BARTECKI comes in. GROZNICKA takes POLUSIA's hand and leads her away.*] Come with me, Polusia, I want to give you some wool to spin.

SIXTH SCENE.

MILOSKI and BARTECKI.

MILOSKI. And who are you, my brother?

BARTECKI. I am Bartecki, Mr. Groznicki's secretary.

MILOSKI. What are you sneaking round here for?

BARTECKI. I am attending to my business, sir.

MILOSKI. Don't Groznicki look after the business himself?

BARTECKI. The most of it passes through my hands.

MILOSKI. Go and look into your papers, and don't be fussing round here. [*He goes away.*]

BARTECKI. Yes, you are afraid Bartecki will spoil your game. Mrs. Groznicka, instead of pleading my cause with Polusia, has been helping the master. She is afraid of me, and not without reason. Mrs. Groznicka and Polusia together, and not without a reason. But I will tell Szymon, and he will lead Polusia a dance.

SEVENTH SCENE.

BARTECKI and SZYMON.

SZYMON. Can you not tell me, Mr. Barteki, where my Polusia is?

BARTECKI. A few minutes since she was with Mrs. Groznicka.

SZYMON. They sent for her to bring bread, but she never stayed so long before.

BARTECKI. She would not have stayed now if there had not been other reasons.

SZYMON. And what might they be?

BARTECKI. But you must not betray me.

SZYMON. Certainly not; you know, Barteki, that I am not given to gossiping.

BARTECKI. Our master was much pleased with Polusia, and it was because Mrs. Groznicka was to manage the business for him that she sent for Polusia, and I found them all together, the master and Mrs. Groznicka and Polusia. I should not wonder if she persuaded Polusia to listen to him.

SZYMON. Can that affliction still be awaiting me?

BARTECKI. Mr. Szymon, this may secure my happiness. Give me Polusia, and the master will not be running after her any more.

SZYMON. That I cannot do; and you are certainly doing my daughter injustice. But where can she be now? My God, give me my daughter back again! My Polusia is virtuous; the master cannot accomplish anything with her!

EIGHTH SCENE.

SZYMON, POLUSIA, and BARTECKI.

BARTECKI. Here is Polusia.

POLUSIA. [*Kissing her father passionately.*] If they would only not part us!

SZYMON. What is the matter, Polusia; what is it?

POLUSIA. They say I must leave my darling father; but they may take my life first.

SZYMON. What has happened?

POLUSIA. First, Mrs. Groznicka advised me to go to War-

saw, where my happiness would be secured ; then our master came in, and he also advised me to go there. Then he gave me money and kissed me, and then Mrs. Groznicka took my hand and led me into the next room.

BARTECKI. That is true ; I was there at the time.

SZYMON. But you were not there to oppose the master. What next, my daughter ?

BARTECKI. He made all sorts of fine promises to Polusia.

SZYMON. Mr. Bartecki, please to let Polusia speak for herself.

POLUSIA. When we were in the big room, she said she must go into the bedroom to look for some wool she meant to give me to spin for her, and that I must be patient and wait a little. When she went out I heard that she locked the door. Oh, I was so frightened !

BARTECKI. That is not possible, Polusia. You must be making that up.

SZYMON. I must beg you again, Mr. Bartecki, to let Polusia speak for herself to the end.

POLUSIA. Then it came into my mind that they meant to carry me off to that unfortunate Warsaw.

BARTECKI. Did you not want to go, Polusia ?

POLUSIA. Oh, I got such a fright ! I thought they would carry me off, and I would not be able to tell father what had become of me.

BARTECKI. They meant to use force—force !

SZYMON. Be so good, Mr. Bartecki, as to allow Polusia to speak.

POLUSIA. Then I ran to the window and opened it and jumped out safely. Keep me, father ; do not let them take me to Warsaw !

SZYMON. And the money which the master gave you, what did you do with it ?

POLUSIA. I kept it here in the hollow of my hand, but in my fright I nearly lost it when I jumped.

BARTECKI. And did not you count, Polusia, how much master gave you ?

SZYMON. How could she count it in her fright ? [*He takes the money away from her.*]

NINTH SCENE.

The same, STATECKI, and GROZNICKI.

STATECKI. What is it, Szymon? What is the matter with Polusia? She don't look like herself.

SZYMON. One misfortune, as it so often happens, follows close upon the heels of another.

BARTECKI. Was it you, kind-hearted man, who sent for Polusia?

GROZNICKI. What on earth has happened to Polusia?

SZYMON. Ask your wife; she knows all about it.

STATECKI. But explain yourself, Szymon.

SZYMON. Although you are the friend of the master, I know you to be an honorable man, and I beg you in the name of the virtue which you profess to love to support us against him.

STATECKI. What is it that you want from Mr. Miloski?

SZYMON. That he should not take away from me that which he did not give me. Mrs. Groznicka has been trying to persuade my Polusia to go with the master to Warsaw. He has even given her money. Fortune seems to have turned her back upon me entirely since I have been obliged to live in a dark hut. A stranger robbed me of my inheritance, and now he is laying snares for the virtue of my child, the only thing left me.

TENTH SCENE.

MILOSKI, STATECKI, GROZNICKI, GROZNICKA, SZYMON,
POLUSIA, and BARTECKI.

MILOSKI. What did you run away for, Polusia? I only wanted to secure your happiness.

SZYMON. That depends upon what you call happiness, sir.

MILOSKI. Hush, peasant! Mr. Groznicki, did you ever hear such impudence?

STATECKI. But, Mr. Miloski, Szymon only spoke the truth. [STATECKI seizes MILOSKI's hand.]

GROZNICKI. And I say that he is only a peasant like any other.

SZYMON. Mr. Groznicki, I am working on Mr. Miloski's

land and have to pay my rent and dues, but I am not obliged to suffer wrong from him or to allow him to carry off my daughter. As to the money you gave Polusia, it was to be the price of shame. Here, I give it back to you, and assure you that we, at least, love virtue more than money.

MIŁOSKI. I really believe he means to read me a lecture. What pretensions such a serf can make!

SZYMON. I am as free as you, and as much a gentleman; and you have insulted me.

GROZNICKA. Woe, woe! he compares himself to our master!

MIŁOSKI. Bad blood! All that you can prove is that you are proud and unthankful.

SZYMON. I breathe the same air as you, and am warmed by the same sun.

GROZNICKI. Nonsense! nonsense! We will soon stop this!

MIŁOSKI. And I, peasant, shall not put up with it any longer.

STATECKI. Do you allow me, sir, to speak with him, to see if what he says is true?

MIŁOSKI. If he does not give me his daughter willingly, I will soon teach him the difference between a peasant and his master.

BARTECKI. [*Aside to POLUSIA.*] You will have a nice time with him!

POLUSIA. If I only did not have to leave father; nothing would ever be nice without him.

SZYMON. As you wish to take my child from me by force, I must tell you that I am noble-born, like yourself, and you cannot do me wrong with impunity.

MIŁOSKI. What nonsense is this?

STATECKI. I do not understand him. Let him explain himself.

SZYMON. I can establish my birth by ample proof. I never told my name to my daughter, as I did not wish to excite her pride, as we were so poor. My father was a spendthrift, who wasted his patrimony and left his two sons penniless. John, the oldest, who had learned to read and write, was able to make his way in the world, and became rich; I had learnt nothing, and was obliged to work for

others. After a long time and known to no one I returned to the region where I was born. I settled down in this village, as I wanted to end my days near the stream where I had fished and bathed in my childhood. Thus it is. My father once owned all these villages over which you now lord it. I am Simon Statecki, the younger son of Jacob Statecki.

STATECKI. What do I hear?

MIŁOSKI. Can that be possible? You are Mr. Statecki?

STATECKI. It is certainly true. My father always told me he would give a great deal to know what had become of his brother Szymon. [*Turning to SZYMON.*] My good uncle, I am your nephew. John Statecki is now dead; be my father and my guardian in his stead. Do not any longer wear that peasant's garb, but put on the garments suited to your rank. Polusia, you are my cousin; but take me for your brother, and we will all live together in the home which I inherited.

SZYMON. Oh, my God, how wonderful are thy ways! I have not deserved that thou shouldst show me such wondrous kindness. [*SZYMON embraces STATECKI, and POLUSIA kisses his hand.*]

STATECKI. Do not kiss my hand, Polusia; I am your brother.

MIŁOSKI. Since you are now so happy, I must stand on one side abashed. I will only say to you, Szymon, that as my grandfather wronged yours at the time he purchased the estate, and as I myself intended to injure you still more deeply, I now ask for the hand of Polusia, to make her my lawful wedded wife. Polusia need not be separated from her father. We will find teachers enough who are able and willing to teach her all things that it is necessary for her to know, and her virtue is a sufficient dowry.

GROZNICKI. I hope you will excuse me, master Szymon, as I must now call you. There is nothing so bad that it cannot be turned to some account. If your honor had not been put in prison for debt, this explanation would never have taken place.

SZYMON. All that has been is forgotten. Only I will beg you to be kinder to the poor serfs. They are human beings, even if you will not recognize them as men. They will not

be as fortunate as I have been. No other Statecki will come to the village.

GROZNICKA. And I hope you do not bear me any ill will, Mr. Szymon?

SZYMON. I find it much harder to forgive you than all the others.

BARTECKI. [*In a reproachful tone.*] You will find no employment in the kingdom of heaven!

MILOSKI. Do stop your prayers!

STATECKI. Let him conclude. Do not be so uncharitable, for we are all sinners.

BARTECKI. It was only just on my tongue to say that we must all strive to live honestly. Mr. Szymon and Miss Apollonia have secured such happiness simply because, though poor, they were honest.

POLUSIA. You have spoken well, Barteki; and my father often said the same to me,—“Polusia, be honest and you will be happy.”

X.

CARDS FOR FOUR.

BY ERNST ECKSTEIN.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

BY MRS. FRANCES C. HENDERSON.

"You are talking nonsense again, my dear Otto. If you wish me to understand you, please to talk more coherently."

"But, my dear cousin——"

"He! Pray who is he?"

"The name is of no consequence. I have spoken of the matter solely that you may inform my mother."

"You call that informing; that is a good joke. But let us speak seriously. You know that I am your friend. Your excited state makes me uneasy. What do you intend to do? Give up this oracular obscurity and explain. We are still alone in this bow-window, but the threatening figure of the professor is looming in the distance. If it is in my power to help you I am at your service, only be quick and tell me all."

"Help? No. You are too kind, my dear Lonise; I only ask you, in case anything happens to me, to console my poor mother for the loss of her only son."

"Are you deranged?"

"Unfortunately not. Do you doubt that a pistol-shot might end the days of the healthiest man?"

"You are going to fight a duel?"

"Yes, cousin."

"But in heaven's name, what for?"

"One of us must leave this place; he or I. Do you think

that an honorable man can see an intriguing fellow steal his bride from him without getting angry? I think otherwise. Fate must decide."

"You mean to say you were engaged? I never heard a word of it. You keep your own secrets wonderfully well. May I ask the name of the young lady?"

"As long as she is the bride of another her name shall not cross my lips."

"Otto, I think you view this matter in a wrong light."

"How so, cousin?"

"Just consider: the young girl has been faithless to you. She has given the preference to your rival."

"So, I understand you; but matters stand differently from what you suppose. If she were free to act, that rascal would never have triumphed. She has been positively forced. Must I tell you how easy it is for a tyrannical mother to force her daughter into compliance?"

Louise looked thoughtful.

"She is as unhappy as I," continued the young officer; "but she, as a woman, must suffer without complaining. I, as a man, know how to act."

"And who is the bridegroom?"

"Do not ask for any details. Will you try to comfort my good mother in case I should fall?"

"Otto, you do not know what you are talking about. Think of the consequences, I beseech you!"

"I have weighed everything well."

"That is impossible, or you would never have formed that hare-brained plan. You are on the point of committing a great sin."

Otto shrugged his shoulders, and said, "You choose to consider it such."

"No, really and truly. Your conduct would be wicked, because it would be useless in any case."

"Useless?"

"Yes, my dear Otto. Let us consider the matter practically, without any sentimentality; supposing you are killed?"

"Then this miserable, deceitful life is at an end."

"Very beautifully said, but not logically. It seems to me more consistent with the views of lovers to live by each other's side than to die far from one another."

"But when the former is not possible?"

"It is only faint-heartedness which speaks thus."

"We have tried everything, dear Louise."

"Who knows? Still, we will take it for granted. If you fall you cause great grief to all your relatives, and especially to your beloved, and thus you miss your aim. Is your troubled mind able to understand this plain truth?"

"I do not contradict you, but——"

"Good. Then thesis No. 1 is granted. Now let us take up the second point. We will suppose that you kill your adversary. What will be the consequences?"

Otto's eyes shone with an angry light, and a sardonic smile played around his lips.

"What will be the consequences?" said he, slowly, laying an emphasis on every word. "Your questions are really amusing, my dear cousin! If I kill him, he is punished for his wicked audacity, as he deserves to be, and my beloved——"

"Will never be your wife."

"I should like to see that."

"Otto, do not deceive yourself. If you have not thus far been able to accomplish what you so warmly desire, how can you hope to do it after such a bloody catastrophe?"

"Oh, I will try other means. If the despotic old lady still refuses her consent, I shall then throw off all restraint. I am determined, if necessary, to elope with my bride."

"That sounds very romantic, but I doubt if the young girl would agree to it. I do not, of course, doubt that she has every moral and mental perfection, but I fear she might not have the courage necessary for an elopement. If the maternal authority was able to force a hateful bridegroom upon her, the dutiful daughter will, doubtless, continue to yield to that same authority. One does not become independent in one night."

Otto stared straight before him.

"Or, if I am mistaken," continued the young woman, "why do you not run away with her at once? By hurrying matters a little you might save yourself this impious shedding of blood."

"That is a good idea. But before we found a suitable opportunity the worst might have come to pass. It is only a question of a very few weeks, cousin!"

"That is long enough to conquer a kingdom. Hear me, Otto; I really wish you well. Promise me to wait patiently for eight days, at least."

"Why?"

"For my sake. Perhaps in the mean time some bright idea may strike you. But better still: will you not grant me your full confidence?"

"Ah! what would I not do if I only thought!"

"At any rate, you do not lose anything by talking the matter over with me. What do you think?"

"Certainly not; but——"

"I tell you what. Come to me to-morrow between four and five, and we will see what can be done. Till then no imprudence. Is it a bargain?"

"I will be at your house punctually at half-past four to-morrow afternoon. And now I will not weary you any longer, cousin. *A propos*, do you dance?"

"No, Otto."

"Otherwise I should have asked for the favor."

"You are very kind, Cousin Otto. Dance with the young girls and forget your troubles. I wish you much pleasure, dear Otto."

The young officer rose, and kissed his friend's hand with knightly grace. Then he disappeared in the crowd.

Soon after appeared the venerable gentleman whom the lady had designated as the "threatening figure of the professor." He was accompanied by a fine-looking gentleman about thirty years old.

"Will you allow me, madam, to introduce to you the son of one of my dearest friends, Dr. Leopold Winthen, who owns a fine estate in Rodenstadt? Frau von Ustendorff."

Louise blushed slightly, and the young man seemed exceedingly surprised.

"Is it possible?" said he, with a deep bow. "Miss Louise von Gerhard!"

"Oh! you have met before."

"We were neighbors, professor," replied Leopold. "When you spoke of the charming Frau von Ustendorff I had no idea."

"Now really! Well, that is such good luck as one does not meet with every day. So you knew each other before?"

You will have a great deal of news to exchange, weddings and deaths, etc. I will not disturb you."

"But indeed, professor, you would not disturb us in the least."

"I know, I know. I will have the honor later. Your most humble servant."

With a friendly nod, he left them alone, and wandered to another part of the room.

Leopold was the first to break silence.

"Miss—madam, I should say. How strange that sounds!"

Louise smiled.

"Verily, when one has known a lady solely as Fräulein von Gerhard, and finds her suddenly and unexpectedly again as Frau von Ustendorff, you must admit yourself——"

"Bah! that is the march of time. Neither were you a doctor of philosophy when I saw you last."

"How long is it since we met at the masked ball at Miss Henrietta's?"

"Full six or seven years."

"You know that Henrietta has married in the mean time?"

"I suppose so. She was engaged. Our correspondence ceased long ago."

"How transitory everything is in this world! You called her then your best friend."

"Out of sight out of mind. She was to blame. Is she happy with her Reinhold?"

"How,—Reinhold? She soon got tired of him. She married a rich banker from Berlin, and Reinhold, in despair, went to America."

"Silly fellow!"

"It is strange that you should thus lose sight of your intimate friends."

"But how do you hear the news?"

"My sister writes it to me from time to time to keep me *au courant*."

"Under those circumstances it is not exactly flattering that you should never have heard the name Ustendorff."

"That is altogether different."

"How so?"

"It was—it happened—it was my express wish."

"Better still. Do you know, doctor, that you are really very, very ungallant?"

"You misunderstand me."

"No, no; I always felt that you treated me in a very peculiar manner. But excuse me, if I speak of things which happened long ago."

"My dear madam, I do not know how it is, but you misunderstand me completely."

"I am only joking."

"True, you are joking; but there is sober earnest at the bottom. I confess that I have often been puzzled to understand your manner. So this sort of repulsion must have been mutual."

"That is possible."

"If I was occasionally—perhaps involuntarily—a little abrupt or ironical, it was because I felt that you positively disliked me."

Louise blushed scarlet.

"You were mistaken," said she, with forced composure. "I saw that you could be very agreeable when you wished; I appreciated your various good qualities, but——"

She stopped.

"Pray continue; but?"

"But it annoyed me to see that you purposely changed your manner as soon as you came near me."

"My dear madam," said Leopold, steadfastly, "dare I be frank?"

"Why not? I like frankness as much in trifles as in important matters. Speak!"

"You are married, I am engaged, so that any kind of embarrassment would be out of place here. I told you that it was at my express request that my sister avoided all mention of you and your fate."

"And I did not think that exactly complimentary."

"But you do not know what my motive was."

"I should really like to know."

"I loved you."

Louise laughed; and said, "You are your old self. I believe you said something of the kind once to Henrietta, and I can assure you that I thought that joke in very bad taste."

"But I assure you, my dear madam——"

"Oh, yes; I know you. Henrietta laughed at me so long that evening that I finally turned my back upon her in high dudgeon. For two weeks we were not on speaking terms. This quarrel between two friends was your work, doctor."

"Then the serpent deceived you. What did she say?"

"How can I remember her words? You ask for an impossibility."

"Try to remember them."

"I believe I do; but it is a matter of no consequence."

"Oh, it is of great consequence to me, if you think me a second Mephistopheles or not! What did she say?"

"She came to me and congratulated me on my learned admirer. I did not understand her. 'Dear Louise,' said she, 'he has made me his confidante. He adores you and is going to write sonnets to you, as Chloe, in all the periodicals.' And in saying that she laughed so immoderately that she brought tears of vexation into my eyes."

Leopold took a thoughtful attitude.

"That was either the most unpardonable duplicity or unparalleled stupidity. I had made her my confidante, and asked her to help me. The wretch!"

"Let us talk of something else."

"Why, I should exactly like to convince you."

"But, I pray you——"

"No, no! as we are talking about it now, I must make a clean breast of it. Heaven is my witness, I was madly in love with you."

"Really?"

"Yes; far, far more than in my present bride."

"You are quite naïf! Poor girl!"

"I am simply stating a very intelligible fact."

"Intelligible? Do you mean that for a compliment? If so, I must tell you at once that I am very obtuse."

"I did not mean it so, neither did I wish to draw a parallel. The Louise von Gerhard whom I knew was too different from my quiet, fair-haired Emmy. No, I did not mean it so; but at thirty a man loves more rationally than at twenty."

"More rational? It was really very silly to admire the aforesaid Louise."

"You are really expert in twisting the most harmless remark. What I mean is that at thirty the heart can no longer feel the same burning, overpowering, self-renouncing love which throws such a halo over our youth."

"What do you mean by burning, overpowering, self-renouncing? If you really love your Emmy, these three adjectives ought to be just as applicable now as then."

"As then? That is exactly what I deny. I repeat it, at my age a man has left all the illusions of youth behind him. My blood flows now so quietly, so coolly through my veins, that I can speak of the days of my first love as coolly as I would of some historical fact. And I thank heaven that it is so!"

Louise gazed dreamily around and played with her fan. At last she broke the silence by saying,—

"So, you are engaged? Would it be indiscreet to ask for a description of the future 'Mrs. Doctor'?"

"Not at all. My bride is the only daughter of the widow of Counsellor Fabricius. She is eighteen years old, fair, rosy, slender, and could doubtless write a pretty fair French letter. She is modest and sweet tempered——"

"What can you desire more? I congratulate you from my heart, doctor."

"Much obliged. Do you not know the family?"

"I regret——"

"If you did I should ask you for some details. All that I know is that Emmy is a sweet, amiable girl, and that Mamma Fabricius is a lady—well, a lady who was evidently cut out for a mother-in-law."

"And you really feel so little interest in a family with which you are soon to be so closely allied?"

"What could I do? It is only three weeks since I came to this town, and only nine days since I became engaged."

"Is that possible? Your happiness is still in its infancy."

"Yes. When one is thirty years old one has neither time nor inclination to indulge in romantic love-making. I saw Emmy at a small party; she did not seem to dislike me, I was pleased with her, and so I thought——"

"Say, rather, it was altogether thoughtless."

"My dear madam, in such things I can trust my knowledge of human nature. It was the wonderful quiet and

repose of Emmy's nature which attracted me. I said to myself, 'This innocent child seems to have been made for you. She will neither try to deceive you nor to tyrannize over you, and as you must sooner or later give up this wandering life——'

"Really, you made up your mind quickly."

"I am really tired of roaming around. I know half of Europe and a good part of Asia and Africa."

"I believe you own an estate?"

"Yes; but I have really troubled myself as little about its management as an Esquimaux about æsthetics. Since—since I left my home and all that was dear to me, I have wandered around and carried with me everywhere the image of a cold and mocking, ah! but beautiful face; and this phantom,—which has driven me from Rome to Cairo, from St. Petersburg to Nischnij Novgorod, from the Tagus to the Euphrates,—this sweet, torturing creation of my brain was yourself, Miss Louise,—madam, I should say."

"You really went as far as the Euphrates?" said Louise, in charming confusion.

"As far as the Euphrates, and farther. Oh! we travel rapidly when we seek rest and forgetfulness. Thank heaven! this childish longing diminished as years increased. I became reasonable. I forgot the beloved demon who had frightened me away from my home. I learnt to understand life, and in my few happy moments I laughed at my own fancies."

"Is—is the Euphrates a fine river?"

"Oh, yes, tolerably; but when I was walking along its banks I cared but little for beautiful landscapes. It was only six months after that masked ball. The wound was still too fresh, Frau von Ustendorff!"

"You talk as if I had done you some great wrong. So your bride is Emmy Fabricius? Why is she not here?"

"Mamma did not allow it, to speak with respect. The little one is busy preparing her trousseau. From morning till evening she is surrounded by six or seven sewing-girls, and they work till midnight."

"Is the wedding-day so near at hand?"

"I suppose in four or five weeks; but Mamma Fabricius settles everything. I have given her *plein pouvoir*."

"Shall we not be able to see your bride before the wedding?"

"I really doubt it."

"What a pity!"

"You feel some interest in her?"

"A deep interest!"

"Hm! Do you know what?"

"Well?"

"Go with me to-morrow to see Mrs. Fabricius."

"What are you thinking of?"

"You are startled by my proposal?"

"I certainly am."

"But, my dear madam, we are no longer children. If necessary we can take a chaperon."

"I can chaperon myself."

"You see: do me this favor, the first which I have asked of you in my whole life."

"But what will the family in Grubenhain think if a perfect stranger——"

"A stranger? I will introduce you as a friend of my youth, as my cousin,—my sister, if you will. Mamma Fabricius will receive you with open arms. You can give the little one some hints about her wedding-dress, and a bond of everlasting friendship is thus formed."

"Your idea is very eccentric."

"But good; say yes."

"Well, then, yes. You see that, spite of my twenty-eight years, I can still play a mad prank."

"Agreed! I will come for you in my one-horse buggy at half-past nine. *Nota bene.* Excuse my rudeness; I have not yet asked after your husband. I shall be most happy to make his acquaintance."

Louise hesitated a moment, and then said, solemnly, "Herr von Ustendorff is dead."

"Dead? You are a widow?"

"My husband fell at Sadowa, as a faithful officer, fighting in the service of his country."

At this moment the professor returned to them, and the conversation took another turn. Leopold took very little part in it. When, a few moments later, the signal was given for a polonaise, he departed, with a silent bow, and hurried

into the dancing-room, where he stood gazing at the couples dancing. He was in an inexplicable state of mind. He found it impossible to fix his attention upon anything. It was in vain that he reminded himself that it is most interesting to study the physiognomy of the ladies in a strange town. He found himself forever straying in the side-paths of an aimless revery. At last, without being aware of it, he leaned against the handsome marble mantel-piece, and stared at the bow-window where Louise was talking with the professor and three or four other gentlemen.

How beautiful she was! How softly the dark brown hair shaded her noble forehead! And those eyes,—those expressive, fascinating eyes! Yes, that was the sweet, romantic look which had first captivated him. She had lost none of her charm. On the contrary, it seemed to him as if the rose had only now opened fully, and as if it were only now that her soul had expanded so as to fill its charming casket. In the depth of his soul remembrance, love, and longing were once more busy. His love for Louise seemed to have been fanned into a fresh flame, and to have been only smouldering under the ashes; and she was now freer than she had ever been,—free not only from outward bonds, but free from all misunderstanding. She knew now what he had never revealed; she understood what had seemed inexplicable to her. “Oh, Louise, Louise! has fate separated us a second time?”

He could no longer bear to contemplate his beloved. He longed for cooling, for a storm even. In a few muttered words he took leave of the lady of the house and hurried out into the frosty March night. He ran hastily through the empty streets, without knowing whither or wherefore. Suddenly he found himself seized by the left arm.

“Hollo!” called he, in a mocking tone, after he had shaken off his opponent. “Take care, my friend, that I do not break all your ribs for you. What has come over you, in the devil’s name?”

“I have already asked you three times to listen to me,” answered a choking voice. “You must give me satisfaction, at once, on the spot.”

“Who are you?” asked Leopold, as coolly as he could.

“My name is Otto von Fersen.”

“I have not the honor of your acquaintance.”

"I am a lieutenant in the —th Infantry Regiment."

"We expect elegant manners from an officer."

"It depends upon the person to whom he speaks. Will you stand still now?"

"It is too cool, lieutenant. If you have anything to say to me you must try to keep up with me."

"You must fight me."

"Fight, with you!"

"Yes; and at five paces *barrière*. I shall kill you."

"I really think you must be mistaken in your man. Besides this, you must reflect that you are sinning against etiquette. Do you not know that it is customary to send a second to make all the necessary arrangements in such matters?"

"I do not need your instructions, I only wish to know if you will fight."

"And if I should say no?"

"Then I would shoot you through the head."

"And supposing you should miss your aim?"

"Do not goad me to the utmost."

"And in what might that 'utmost' consist?"

The officer pulled out a revolver from under his cloak. One second later Leopold had wrested it from him. He put it in his overcoat-pocket, and said, "You may thank me, sir. I am keeping you from a boyish act of folly."

"Give me back my revolver," said the lieutenant.

"I shall take good care not to do that. Besides, I am weary of this conversation. Good-night, lieutenant. Tomorrow you can send your servant to get this thing. Here is my card."

"So you refuse to give me satisfaction?"

Leopold stopped for a moment. The light of a gas lantern fell on the pale, distorted countenance of the young man, and gave him an expression of grief and distress which was well calculated to inspire pity.

"Lieutenant," said Leopold, in a milder tone, "I am quite willing to give you satisfaction as a man of honor. Only I must really beg you earnestly to tell me quietly how I have offended you. I give you my word that I have not the slightest recollection of ever having seen you before."

"You have insulted me in the most tender point where a

man of honor can be struck, and besides that, you have robbed me of the happiness of my whole life."

"Please to look at my card. There is certainly some misunderstanding here."

"Oh! I know that hated name which causes every drop of blood in my veins to boil!"

"You are certainly frank, but you must really allow me to doubt your sanity. I am not conscious of having offended you in any way."

"You are a miserable intrigant!"

"Before I allow you to insult me, I must beg you to tell me in what my supposed offence consists. Then only shall I be able to decide whether I am dealing with a sick man or a professional bravo."

"Sir!"

"Do be quiet. Your voice trembles like that of a poor culprit. I will willingly forgive your rudeness if you will tell me in what way I can serve you."

"You must leave this town and never return to it, and then I will take back all I have said."

"That is not possible."

"Make it possible."

"That is a queer idea. My presence troubles you: I cannot understand that. I should think the town were large enough to contain even two mortal enemies."

"But too small for two rivals. One of us must leave the field."

"We are rivals? I could not see that in your face. And pray in what are we rivals?"

"And you really do not know?"

"Upon my word, all that I know is that it is very cold. Let us drink a cup of coffee."

The young officer seemed lost in thought, but he followed his opponent mechanically to the nearest coffee-house. They continued the conversation in a low tone.

"Good heavens, how you look!" said Leopold, with genuine sympathy.

The officer did not seem to be able to overcome his dislike of his opponent. Leopold smiled.

"Let us talk sensibly about this matter, my dear lieutenant. As you sit there, as pale and sorrowful as if death were gnaw-

ing at your heart, you really inspire me with pity. Take a good sup of that brandy,—so. And now, tell me wherein we are rivals. I have tried in vain to solve the enigma.”

“I see that you really do not know how deeply you have injured me. But that makes no difference; I must still insist upon my demand. You must either set off to-morrow and promise never to let any one here hear of you again, or you must fight me.”

“Take another sup of brandy, lieutenant. So I must set off to-morrow? But if I tell you that I am going to be married here very soon?”

The officer became, if possible, a shade paler.

“That is just the point,” muttered he. “You must not marry,—at least, not my Emmy.”

“So there is where the shoe pinches! Hm, hm! You love the girl?”

“More than life.”

“And does Emmy know it?”

“She returns my love.”

“Indeed! no one had said a word about that. Have you proofs?”

“Oh, a thousand, if you want them! See here!”

He pulled out a photograph. Leopold recognized the features of his bride. On the back side he read the words, “To my ardently beloved Otto, with a hundred kisses. Emmy.”

“Hm!” said Leopold, meditatively. “It seems to be true. But the child never told me,—never said one word.”

“She is so timid——”

“Yes, yes, you are right; very timid, very timid. *À propos* to what I meant to say, it is singular the mother never told me.”

“Oh, the horrid old tyrant! She has made the mischief. They are rich, my property is moderate. You, perhaps, know how to pay court to a mother-in-law; I do not. That settled the question. The heart of the poor girl was never consulted.”

Leopold supported his burning forehead with his right hand. He did not say a word. The lieutenant sipped his smoking coffee slowly. At last Leopold said,—

“You love the girl sincerely?”

“More than myself.”

"And you will make the good child happy if I, after mature consideration——"

"What?" screamed Otto, so loud that he was frightened at his own voice. "Do I understand you aright?"

"Let me explain myself. My dear lieutenant, the silliest thing a man can do is to marry a girl who has given her heart to another."

"That is an undeniable truth," replied the trembling young man.

"Listen to me. Would it be disagreeable to you if I should give you my official title of bridegroom?"

"Oh, inconsiderate noble-mindedness!" screamed Otto, beside himself with joy. "You are a man of honor, a cavalier in the truest sense of the word! Oh, I do not know what I say! Are you really in earnest, or are you joking with me?" He was panting for breath.

"Take another sup," said Leopold. "I am in earnest. Emmy is yours. Far be it from me to joke on such subjects."

"And the counsellor's widow——"

"The mother-in-law?"

"She will never ratify our bargain!"

"I will take care of that."

"Oh, how can I thank you, my angelic friend? Such a sacrifice! I know better than any one else what you are giving up. Your generosity touches me even to tears!"

"Be quiet, my dear lieutenant. I am only acting rationally. And now, listen to my proposal."

"I am all ear. Heavens! I can still not understand it! *Himmelschockmillionendonnerwetter!* Do not take it amiss if I swear a little, but I was obliged to ease my heart a little."

"Do not restrain yourself."

"Well, then?"

"Be to-morrow, a little before eleven o'clock, by the large elm-tree near Grubenhain, and leave everything else to fate, or in other words, to me."

"I shall be punctual."

"And now, good-night."

"Good-night, my dear friend, my preserver!"

"*A propos*, here is your revolver."

"I am really ashamed of myself! May I beg you to keep the weapon as a souvenir of this evening?"

"Thanks; I accept it. And now, sleep well and dream of your Emmy."

The two men separated. Otto dreamt of Emmy, but Leopold did not close his eyes all night.

The next morning, at the appointed hour, the one-horse buggy drove up to the door. The radiant, cloudless March sky promised a pleasant drive. Leopold gave his arm to the beautiful widow and led her to the carriage.

"You are driving yourself!" said Louise, surprised, when she saw the handsome buggy.

Leopold answered in the affirmative.

Frau von Ustendorff blushed slightly, but she politely admired the handsome bay, who was impatiently pawing the ground, and jumped lightly into the inviting vehicle. Leopold seized the reins, and the fast trotter went off like a dart.

In five minutes they were in the country. Louise opened her pink-lined parasol, and looked like a Madonna surrounded by the glow of a brilliant sunset. Leopold let his horse fall into a gentle trot, and hung the reins on the iron rod placed there for that purpose.

"It is a lovely morning," said Louise.

"The loveliest I have ever seen," replied Leopold.

"Do you see the enchanting young green on the fields?"

"And the enchanting red on my neighbor's cheeks?"

"My dear doctor, I must really beg you."

"Excuse me, if I forgot that you could hear me. I was only thinking aloud."

"Think of something better. How beautifully that gray old castle stands out from the blue sky! Have you really no eye for the beauties of nature?"

"The castle yonder? Really very picturesque. It reminds me forcibly of the Vehmberg near D——. Do you remember how the count locked us up in the convent chapel?"

"No; I do not."

"It was on that very excursion where Henrietta engaged herself to the Reinhold whom she jilted afterwards so shamefully. You and I, and who was the third? I think my sister, or some other of our acquaintances."

"It was your sister. We wandered through the dark old

church. The count locked the door, and we were obliged to call and knock for two hours before we were released."

"Oh, I was so happy then! I could have fallen at your feet and worshipped you."

"If I remember aright, we talked merely of indifferent things."

"Ah, Louise! I did not know what I said. I saw only your soft dark eyes, and thought for one short hour that I was not indifferent to you. Then came the bitter awakening to the truth. You did not grant me a single look the whole of the rest of the day. You made yourself so agreeable to that horrid man, Herr von Serbingen, and had so little sympathy with my feelings at the time, that I could have died."

"I never liked Herr von Serbingen."

"Public opinion said the contrary."

The young widow looked aside to hide her deep blushes.

"Appearances are often deceitful," said she.

"But I cannot understand——"

"You are a bad psychologist, doctor. Now we can talk frankly. I made myself agreeable to Herr von Serbingen out of caprice, out of spite, to show you that I did not care about your attentions."

"But for mercy's sake, what had I done to make you dislike me so fearfully? Was I ever wanting in politeness? It was only later, when I had convinced myself that it was perfectly useless to court you, after Henrietta had assured me that you disliked me from the bottom of your heart."

"What? did she say that? The story-teller!"

"Louise! Can it be possible? Could she have deceived us both? You did not really despise and hate me?"

"I told you yesterday already that you were mistaken. On the contrary——"

"On the contrary. Oh, say that once more! You felt a little friendship for me."

"I liked you at first much better than I was willing to admit. It was only afterwards, when I learned——"

"Oh, the wicked traitor! She has robbed me of the happiness of my whole life! Oh, sweet, heavenly Louise! why must I lose thee before thou wast mine?"

"In the name of heaven, what language! Is it suitable

for a bridegroom who is on his way to greet his bride? I almost regret having accepted your invitation."

"Louise, Louise, I love thee more than life!"

"Please to come to your senses. Do you wish me to get out?"

"Remain, remain, and let me gaze into the depths of your beautiful unfathomable eyes!"

"Look into your Emmy's eyes."

"Listen to me, dear madam. Fate did not grant you to me. I had resigned myself to what was unavoidable. You became Frau von Ustendorff. I roamed far and near, to seek peace. The wound my heart received in its youth has been scarred over, but life has lost all charm for me."

"Remember that you are on the way to your bride."

"Please not to interrupt me. I am resigned to my lot, but I have still one ardent wish. Will you grant it, Louise?"

"Speak."

"I would like to read your soul. Did you love your husband?"

"What a question!"

"You will not answer it?"

"I esteemed him. I liked him."

"Did you love him?"

"What do you call love? I loved him, as—as you love your Emmy."

"I could throw myself at your feet for that answer. Further: if I had had the courage to propose for you at the same time that he did——"

"Enough, doctor!"

"Would you have given him the preference? Answer me."

"Is that the way to speak to a lady?"

"Answer me."

"No."

"I beseech you by all the tears I have shed for you, by all my buried happiness! Whom would you have chosen?"

"I have already told you that I did not love Herr von Ustendorff with that blind devotion of which you speak."

"Oh, oh, Louise! you render me the happiest of mortals! Could you love me, Louise? Oh, say yes! Give me your lovely and beloved hand!"

"Are you deranged, doctor?"

" Louise, my adored bride !"

He threw his arm round her neck. She blushed deeply, and began to weep bitterly.

" I did not deserve this," said she. " If you wanted to revenge yourself you have succeeded. Your mockery hurts me more than I can express."

She covered her face with both hands.

" But, Louise, star of my life, hear me. Will you send me from you a second time ? It is you only whom I love. The *fade* dream with Emmy is at an end."

" What do you mean ?" said she, still weeping. " Take me home."

" Never ! I shall never let you go again, my beloved. I will keep you always. Dry your tears, my darling. Since yesterday evening Emmy is the bride of another. She is as happy as I. And now tell me quietly and rationally, shall we now make up for the wrong we did ourselves and each other seven years ago ? Will you be my sweet, adored wife ?"

The buggy entered the wood. The sensible horse followed the road without needing his master's guidance. Tall pines rose to the right and to the left. Louise laid her head on the shoulder of the friend of her youth. In the mean time the lieutenant was waiting under the elm. At ten o'clock he was already at the appointed place. A hundred times already he had walked through the little clearing and looked down the road, like a man who does not know what he is to expect. From time to time he stood still to listen. Not a sound.

" It is true," said he to himself, " I came an hour too soon. But that does not matter. If he could understand my impatience, if he had the least idea what true, ardent love is, he would have hurried here on the wings of the storm-wind, without thinking of the words of our agreement. No, he never loved Emmy ! Or does he perhaps regret the promise he gave me yesterday ? Frightful idea ! If he had maliciously placed me on the pinnacle of happiness to make my fall into the depths of despair the more crushing ? Nonsense ! I am ungrateful ! He is noble-minded ! Who knows if his generosity did not cost him violent inward struggles, which must have been the more heart-rending that he used sufficient self-control to conceal them ? To lose Emmy !

Is it possible to imagine a greater misfortune? But no, he was so calm, so cheerful. It could not have been a sacrifice." He pulled out his watch. "A quarter-past ten!" he murmured. "I have still three-quarters of an hour to wait, if he is punctual."

At that moment he heard the rumbling of carriage-wheels. He hurried on to the high-road. To his unutterable surprise he saw his benevolent friend of yesterday sitting by Louise, his gracious cousin. But what astonished him still more than this buggy *tête-à-tête* was the inexplicable fact that the vehicle was at that moment turning round to drive back to the town.

The quick-sighted reader will more easily comprehend this. After the first transports of the lovers had subsided, cool reflection resumed her sway. Leopold would gladly have driven on thus to the end of time, but he remembered his appointment with the lieutenant. Louise already suspected that the proposed visit to Grubenhain was only a *ruse de guerre*, and at any rate she could not very well accompany her bridegroom, even if it were true, as he laughingly said that he wished to speak with his ex-mother-in-law on business. Leopold knew nothing of the relationship between Louise and the fiery young fellow with whom he had made an appointment under the elm-tree. If he had, his fancy for dramatic effects might perhaps have induced him to form some other plan. As matters stood, he could only yield to his bride's wish and drive back to town.

The lieutenant, who was completely hidden by the undergrowth in the little wood, could not be seen by either of them. Even without the impatience of love which was devouring him, his curiosity would have induced him to try to solve the enigma before his eyes. So he stepped quickly outside of the bushes, and, making a speaking-trumpet of his hands, screamed after the retreating vehicle,—

"Cousin! Louise! Hollo, doctor! It is I, cousin!"

Leopold and his companion turned around, making gestures of great astonishment.

"Oh! but that is my cousin Otto!" said the widow, blushing.

"Thy cousin, my love? Why, that is the crazy officer who wanted to shoot me last evening."

The lieutenant winked, and called louder and louder. "Turn round!" thundered he, through the still pine wood.

"Let us turn round," whispered Louise. "I am curious to know what he wants to say to us."

A new light struck Leopold and inspired him with a bold idea. If Louise was the lieutenant's cousin, her visit to Grubenhain was accounted for. Besides, as an experienced man he knew that he had sufficient tact and skill to sail round a dangerous coast. His own moral superiority, the eloquence of an accomplished fact, shame, surprise, and the prospect of finding a satisfactory way out of this painful situation, all these might conquer a woman even of the character of the counsellor's widow. The thought of introducing his own bride and Emmy's bräutigam at one and the same time charmed him so that he determined to make every effort to win Louise over to his way of thinking.

His first words were, "Lieutenant, I have the honor of introducing to you my dear *Braut* Louise von Ustendorff, née Von Gerffard. Louise, allow me to make you acquainted with the happy bridegroom of my Emmy."

And now followed questions and answers, which we, who know the story, need not repeat. Louise reproached her cousin with having tried to carry out his impious plan without waiting for their interview. Otto excused himself, alleging success, and expressed his gratitude towards Emmy's ex-bräutigam in the most glowing terms. After mutual congratulations, the inevitable question, "What shall we do next?" was asked.

Leopold disclosed his plan, and advocated it so successfully that Louise at last agreed, saying that she threw off all responsibility on to her lover. Otto was, from the first, strongly in favor of the proposed mode of action. He seated himself on the uncomfortable little front seat opposite the doctor, and they started at full speed for the house.

"Have you the photograph with you?" asked the doctor, as he jumped out of the buggy and threw the reins to an approaching stable-boy.

"Emmy's picture?"

"Yes; the one with the touching inscription?"

"Of course."

"Will you trust it to me for a few minutes?"

"Certainly."

"Now, then, for action."

The counsellor's widow was not a little astonished when the servant announced the triple visit. Her surprise turned to indignation when she saw the lieutenant, whom she had not allowed to enter the house for a month.

"I bring you dear relations, honored *Hofraethin*," said Leopold, with a polite bow.

"I am much pleased to see them, son-in-law; please be seated."

Louise and her cousin accepted this invitation so quickly that one might have supposed that they did not feel quite at their ease. The lieutenant's heart beat quite uncomfortably against the bright buttons of his uniform, and the widow did not know exactly where to look.

"And Emmy?" asked Leopold.

Otto trembled.

"Oh, Emmy is very busy," said the *Hofraethin*, smiling.

"Oh, to be sure; the trousseau. But that makes no difference. My dear *Hofraethin*, be so kind as to have her called down for a few minutes."

The *Hofraethin* rang the bell.

"Annette," said she, in a drawling voice, "I request Miss Emmy to come into the drawing-room for a few minutes."

"In the mean time allow me to introduce my relations in due form. Frau von Ustendorff."

Louise bowed.

"Herr Lieutenant von—von—— Upon my word, my dear Otto, I cannot remember your name."

"I have the honor already," said the *Hofraethin*, in an icy tone.

"Ah, *tant mieux, tant mieux!*"

At this moment the door opened. Emmy appeared on the door-sill. She wore a neat and becoming dress. She was very pale. Her pretty blue eyes betrayed a secret sorrow.

She shuddered when she saw the lieutenant. Otto shivered to the tip-end of his sword.

Leopold went to meet the frightened girl, and kissed her hand respectfully. Then he planted himself in the middle of the drawing-room and pulled Emmy's photograph out of his pocket. He read aloud and distinctly as follows:

"To my beloved Otto, with a hundred tender kisses. Emmy."

The poor girl screamed as if a dagger had been plunged into her heart.

"What does that mean?" asked the Hofraethin, frowning.

"Why, it means that Otto is tenderly beloved by Emmy, and kissed by her a hundred times. That seems clear enough."

"I do not see the point. Are you deranged, son-in-law?"

"My name is Leopold. The tenderly beloved Otto is sitting in that chair, trembling."

"In the name of all the saints!"

"Listen to me, Frau Hofraethin. Your dear little Emmy is a charming girl. In the whole of Germany there is perhaps only one lovelier bride; but in my eyes she has one unpardonable fault."

"Doctor!"

"Yes, I say an unpardonable fault. Her heart belongs to another."

"Nonsense! a joke, a flirtation!"

Now it was the lieutenant's turn to speak.

"Oh, dear madam," said he, with a deep-drawn sigh, "do not make two young, joyful hearts eternally miserable! Emmy loves me, as I love her, with an unchanging, unextinguishable love, and only the filial respect due to a mother's positive commandment could have induced her to consent to a——"

"What is the use of wasting words?" said Leopold. "You must understand, madam, that I must, under existing circumstances, renounce all the rights you had granted me. The real and genuine bridegroom stands there. Miss Emmy, please to come a little nearer. Here, my dear lieutenant; the Hofraethin consents willingly to your union. Join hands."

Emmy sobbed with delighted surprise. She timidly held out her rosy fingers.

"Back!" cried her angry mother. "I alone dispose of my daughter's hand!"

"But, my best Hofraethin, you must bow to the decree of fate," said Leopold, soothingly, stepping between the mother and the lovers. "Think of the consequences; an engage-

ment broken off three weeks before the wedding! What would people say? The world would not understand my motives. There would be no end of gossip. And then think of the beautiful trousseau! You surely would not wish to have taken all that trouble for nothing? But I think I hear you say, I shall soon have another proposal for her. So you may, but our Emmy has learnt wisdom from experience. She will die rather than accept a second bridegroom whom her heart has not chosen. And what objection have you really to this excellent young man? He loves your Emmy to desperation, is steady, brave, and honorable, has a respectable income, and regards you, madam, with a degree of reverence which is quite marvellous, considering the way you have treated him. He did not use one angry, light word. In Otto you will gain a son-in-law who will put his hands under your feet. All unpleasantness, all fatality, and all sorrow is at an end if you say yes. Can a woman of you mental gifts, of your high-mindedness, of your dignity and benevolence, refuse to say the one little word which will bring happiness to two innocent mortals, and save the honor of your house and establish the justice of the decrees of fate?"

The Hofraethin was vanquished. She rested her chin meditatively upon her breast. Then she determined to put a good face upon the matter. A broad smile softened the harsh, unsympathizing features.

"Do you really love each other so much, children?" asked the Hofraethin, with an affectation of benevolence.

"To distraction!" cried the lieutenant.

"Yes, mamma," said Emmy.

"And you would really like to marry that young man?"

"Yes, dear mamma, if you are so good as to allow it," was the timid answer.

"Then take each other and marry as soon as you like. I see it is impossible to oppose the intrigues of youth."

"Madam," began Leopold, in a stately manner.

"Sir!" said she, a little hurt.

"I hope you will still grant me your friendship. I belong somewhat to the family. The lieutenant and Frau von Ustendorff are not related to me at the present time, but I am going to remedy that evil as soon as possible."

"I beg your pardon ; I do not understand you, sir."

"Then allow me to present my bride to you. My Louise is first cousin to your son-in-law."

The young widow greeted the startled Hofraethin most gracefully, and apologized for being the uninvited spectator of this family scene. The old lady nodded thoughtfully, as if she saw the matter in a new light.

"So, so ; is that the way the wind blows?" murmured she. "I should never have dreamt of that."

"My dear madam," continued Leopold, "we have fished up two pearls in one net. We will relate everything to you minutely ; and a lady of your acuteness will soon see that things could not have happened otherwise. If you will allow us we will remain to breakfast. My Louise is dying with anxiety to get well acquainted with you."

"Well, then, doctor, here is my hand. Come, lieutenant, fate has spoken ; I forgive you."

"Dear mother !" whispered Otto.

"Noble-minded woman !" said Leopold, emphatically. "I did not expect less from you. A Hofraethin Fabricius cannot hate where all others love."

He raised the hand of the ex-mother-in-law to his lips and kissed it with theatrical pathos.

"And, Miss Emmy," said he, after a pause, "it is true I have no longer a right to your friendly looks ; but I think you might once look at me lovingly. So ! We remain good friends, do we not ?"

The blond child nodded. Louise went up to her and folded her new friend silently in her arms.

XI.

REVENGE.

BY GUSTAV PFLEGER.

TRANSLATED FROM THE CZECH, OR BOHEMIAN,

BY MRS. FRANCES C. HENDERSON.

THE storm had ceased, but a strong wind was still blowing and driving before it clouds which looked almost like newly-fallen snow. It was about half an hour before midnight. A post-chaise was driving rapidly along the highway to the town of J——. The driver whipped up his horses, as they were beginning to lag, but all remained so still within the carriage that one might have supposed at first that there was not a living soul in it. At a turn of the road the pale rays of the moon fell directly into the vehicle and revealed two persons, who seemed to be buried in deep sleep. A closer examination would have showed that one did not sleep, but kept staring fixedly at the road. This was a pale, black-haired man, of about thirty years of age, with very thick eyebrows and fiery though deep-set eyes. On his left sat a young lady, apparently his wife; a thick veil hid her face, but she seemed to be asleep. The man occasionally glanced at her and seemed surprised at her perfect quiet, and then he stared again out of the window.

The white rays of the moon occasionally burst through the dark clouds which had gathered anew, and showed that the carriage was leaving the wood and coming out into the plain. The light from the post-house was shining in the distance, and at the end of about a quarter of an hour the

chaise was standing before the post-house in J——. It was close by the best hotel in the place, and the postilion opened the carriage-door to ask if he should drive to it.

"Have we arrived?" asked the traveller, in a ringing voice.

"Yes, sir," answered the postilion. "The best hotel in the place is close to the post; there is still light in the receiving-room. Do you wish me to call the landlord or the waiter?"

"Do so," replied the gentleman; and the postilion went at once, leaving his tired horses to the care of the stable-boy. In the mean time the male traveller got out, showing that he was a tall, well-made man, very elegantly dressed.

"Can I assist you, Matilda?" said he to the lady in the carriage. "It is beginning to rain again; let us hasten to get under shelter."

The lady rose quietly, and, taking the gentleman's proffered hand, stepped lightly on the iron stirrup and sprang to the ground. At that moment the postilion returned with the waiter of the hotel, who conducted the travellers to the hotel, and opened for them the best room on the first story. It was a plain room, without mirrors, without velvet furniture, without silk quilts on the beds, and yet it looked inviting and comfortable, and the tallow candles at least answered for the good will of the landlord. Two windows looked out on to the street, and on each side of these were two beds, with clean white linen; a large wardrobe, a sofa, and a round table completed the furniture of the room.

The waiter put the bags and parcels into the wardrobe and brought up three leather trunks, and was leaving the room, when the gentleman said, "Is the room next to this occupied?"

"No, sir; but if you wish——"

"Open it, and carry my wife's things into the next room, and call the chambermaid. Bring me wine."

The waiter went. In a short time the key was heard to turn in the outside lock; the door of communication was thrown open, and the chambermaid appeared, carrying two candles. She led the lady into the adjoining room; the gentleman seemed absorbed in deep thought. After a while he got up, and, having ascertained that the lady had finished her toilet, he went to one of the trunks and took out a small

leather travelling-case. From this he took two pistols, closed the case and put it back in the trunk. Having assured himself that the pistols were loaded, he put them in the breast-pocket of his coat.

About this time the strange lady, whom the gentleman called his wife, appeared out of the adjoining room. Her appearance would certainly have struck any one who saw her for the first time. She was nearly as tall as her husband, and her dark eye fairly shot fire; the smile playing round her mouth was ironical rather than friendly, and everything betokened a vivacious and excitable temperament. Her high, snow-white forehead showed unbending determination, and her unflinching dark eyes were overshadowed by dark, wavy hair. One might almost have thought her to be in league with the powers of darkness. Her dress, of a soft and yielding material, fitted closely to the full bust, and a beautiful arm and hand were shown off to advantage by the wide, flowing sleeve. She took a seat near her husband, in an attitude of the most perfect nonchalance, and supported her head with her snow-white hand.

The gentleman remained plunged in deep thought, occasionally he turned towards the lady, and then his whole frame trembled. His lips and round his mouth were ashy pale, and in vain he tried to speak. Some trouble seemed to be gnawing at his heart-strings and to deprive him of the power of utterance. Just then the waiter came in with a large tray, on which were a bottle of wine, some glasses, and a dish of cold meat, with bread and butter.

"We do not need anything more," said the gentleman. "You can order post-horses for six o'clock to-morrow morning for my wife." He drew his chair up to the table and poured wine into two glasses. He emptied his at a draught and filled it again. When he had ordered the post-horses the lady had looked at him inquiringly, but he had not seemed to notice her surprise. After a few moments he spoke. "Matilda," said he, "you will continue your route to-morrow morning, so as to be with your mother as soon as possible."

The lady rose from her seat, and, fixing her piercing eyes upon her husband, she said, "And I tell you, Alfred, I will not go." The tone, still more than the words, announced an invincible determination.

"You shall go without delay, my beloved wife," said the gentleman, laying a marked emphasis upon each word.

"I would rather lose my life; kill me if you will," said Matilda, losing the composure she had hitherto maintained, and drawing nearer to her husband. He turned away his eyes from her bewitching face and beseeching attitude. "It is of no consequence what you wish, Matilda, though heretofore your wish has been my law," said the stranger, firmly.

"Where are *you* going, Alfred?" asked Matilda, quietly.

"I shall go back after a short delay," was the quick reply.

"I shall not go to mamma."

"You are afraid of her iron hand. You know that she has an unbending will and uncompromising uprightness, and that she will force you to care for your own honor and that of the name I have given you," said the young man.

"Not a word more, Alfred!" screamed his wife, and she seized his hand and squeezed it so tight that she left the print of her nails on it. "As your wife I have a right."

"Hush, you are no longer my wife," said the young man. "You have tarnished my fair name, you have sullied mine honor, you have rent in twain the sacred bond which united us. You will remain my wife in the eyes of the world, but you have long ceased to be so in reality."

The lady did not answer a word. Her head had fallen back, her eyes were closed, and the color had left her cheeks; her right hand rested on her bosom, which wore the hue of death. She was unconscious.

The young man had poured himself out and drank two more glasses of wine. He rested his hot head upon his hand and looked with a strange and wondering joy at the beautiful creature near him.

Five minutes passed. The lady recovered consciousness. In the mean time the young man had left the room several times and always returned in deep thought. Suddenly he approached her with a glass of wine in his hand, and said, with piercing irony, "My dear lady, you are a good actor, if you are now playing the comedy. If you are not acting, your weakness surprises me more than your skill would. I shall be much obliged to you if you will remain quiet for a few minutes and listen to me attentively, as this is the last time we shall ever speak together."

The lady trembled on hearing these last words, but she did not speak.

The young man emptied his glass again, and thus addressed his wife :

“ You know—although your memory is your weakest point—that we have been married four years, and that we thought at one time that we loved each other. Your mother, a most excellent woman in every respect, brought you up with the greatest care and the most tender love. She kept you secluded from the world until you should have a husband, and that is doubtless all that kept you from an early fall. I saw you for the first time in the circle of your young friends, I fell in love with you.” Here Alfred’s voice was choked by emotion, and he remained silent for a while. His wife looked downcast and uneasy. At length Alfred resumed his discourse: “ I loved you, but did not find the happiness I expected. You soon showed a dislike for all I liked, but I did not oppose you, I thought you would grow wiser as you grew older. Full of romantic devotion to you, I wished to live only for you. As you wished it, I left my regiment and exchanged the military for the civil service. I did not then realize that I was sinning in loving you so exclusively. Your mother would not, however, agree to my marrying you. She and she only saw that we were not made for each other. We left your mother’s house secretly, after having written her a letter begging for her consent to our union, and also for a *trousseau* which would enable you to appear as became a bride. Even in our honeymoon you craved amusements of every kind and complained of the monotony of our life. I took you to the baths of S——, and there you soon plunged deep into the vortex of dissipation. Anything and everything to make time pass more quickly. I let you do it; I thought you would soon see the hollowness of these empty pleasures, and that you would then appreciate the sterling worth of your husband’s steadfast love. My love was so blind that I did not see that your purity and honor were among the things that *had been*.

“ You went to visit your aunt. I did not accompany you, as I had just been called to the bedside of a dying friend. His death not only cost me my best and truest friend, but was the cause of my losing you entirely. You had com-

pletely forgotten your marriage vow, and had become the heroine of a romance, and your name was coupled in every mouth with opprobrious epithets."

Again Alfred kept silence for a while. Matilda was sitting pale and still in a corner of the sofa. Her eye was fixed on vacancy. She listened mechanically to what he was saying. The wind rushed in through the half-opened window, and streaks of lightning followed each other in rapid succession. The wind howled mournfully and blew out the lights. Alfred went and shut the window, lighted the candles anew, and poured out a fresh glass of wine, which he drank at one gulp.

"Matilda," said he, "you forged my name, and deserved a bloody death."

Matilda shook violently, and covered her face with her hands.

"And you know, Matilda, what I did. I, your unhappy husband, I screened you from punishment. I paid the draft, though it exhausted my available means. I thought you would at last make me some return for my faithful and all-enduring love. But instead of being grateful to me for having saved you from your merited punishment, you threatened at every moment to leave me entirely. And still I loved you. Your mother turned from you and forbade you to enter her house, but I loved you still!

"You know, Matilda, to what your thoughtlessness has led you. You wrote to your paramour offering to fly with him, and that man showed me your letter. He despises your offer and your love. Do you recognize this letter, Matilda?" said Alfred, with the energy of despair. He took a letter from his pocket and showed it to his wife. She screamed as she might have done if he had thrust a dagger into her heart, and she stretched her snow-white hand out to snatch the letter. Alfred jumped back, and Matilda fell partly on the sofa and partly on the floor. Her bosom was heaving as if it might be her death-struggle, and she was panting for breath, and her pale face and wild eyes were frightful to behold.

"Let me read this loving epistle to you, my dear lady. Listen well, lest I should skip some passage, or a word even. 'My beloved Victor! I have made up my mind. My husband persecutes me with his accursed love. Evasions avail

me nothing. I must leave him and come to you. Write me at once, dearest, when it shall be, as until then I am only half alive.'

"You know now, Matilda, what *he* has done with that letter."

Matilda looked up; her eyes shone with an unearthly fire, and the expression of her face was threatening as she turned to Alfred with the rapidity of lightning and looked straight into his eyes.

"Do not take the trouble, dear lady," said Alfred, with a gesture of impatience. "I see to-day that you have not known me; you have thought there were no limits to my endurance."

So saying, he went to the table and put the tell-tale letter into the candle. It flamed up, giving a momentary brilliancy to the room.

The wife screamed again, but this time it seemed to be more a scream of joy at deliverance from a great danger. It was a scream of surprise. She behaved as one deranged; she tossed herself about on the sofa and tore into a hundred pieces the handkerchief which she held in her hand. She loosened her neckkerchief and seemed to have spasms. She looked more like a hyena than a human being.

Alfred had gone to the window, but he turned round, and his face darkened as he gazed on this beautiful fiend. The storm raged outside, the lightning flashed, and all the elements seemed to be unchained. A struggle was going on in the young man's bosom. For a while he was as motionless as if he had been turned to stone; then he seemed to revive, and repeated several times to himself, "It must be; I cannot bear this life longer;" then he turned to his wife, who had in the mean time become quiet, and, going close to her, said,—

"I have forgiven you all, Matilda! May God have mercy on your soul! You have cheated me out of the happiness of my life; you have dishonored my name, and trampled your vows under your feet; you have added one crime to another, but I will forgive you all if you will go to your mother."

"Never, never!" shrieked Matilda. "Kill me rather, terrible man."

"Then I must revenge myself upon you," said Alfred.

He pulled out a pistol and fired twice, three times at his

wife. He cocked the pistol again, pulled the trigger, and the ball went straight through his own heart.

Alfred has at last found peace. In his will he was found to have left all his property to benevolent institutions.

Three months afterwards Matilda went to America with a young nobleman. She had not regretted her husband; on the contrary, she had rejoiced that his death had left her free.

And the moral to this story? The reader must draw it.

XII.

RUE DES PIERRES, NO. 60.

A FLEMISH PLAY WITH A FRENCH NAME.

BY EUGENE STROOBANT.

PERFORMED AT THE FLEMISH THEATRE IN BRUSSELS JUST
AFTER THE FLEMISH SIGNS AT THE CORNERS OF THE
STREETS HAD BEEN TAKEN DOWN.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FLEMISH
BY MRS. FRANCES C. HENDERSON.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

MR. BALLAST, *a member of the Town Council.*
GUSTAVE, *his nephew.*
The garde-champêtre VAN GOYCK.
MR. BREAKHALS.
MATILDA, BALLAST'S niece and GUSTAVE'S sister.
MARIANNA, *a Brussels fishwoman.*
JEAN PIERRE, *a coal merchant,*
TRIEN, *a housemaid out of place.*
WANTJE, *a young peasant girl.*
JOSEPH, *porter at Mr. BALLAST'S.*

FIRST SCENE.

MATILDA and GUSTAVE.

When the curtain goes up MATILDA is sitting down. Before her stands a trunk, and she is looking over various articles of clothing. GUSTAVE is standing to the right, and seems also to be examining a pair of pantaloons.

MATILDA. Can you believe it, Gustave, the nearer the hour of the representation approaches the more anxious I feel?

GUSTAVE. Anxious! and why? I will just ask you one question. When you play in Mr. Van Meel's drawing-room in Ghent, do you feel anxious?

MATILDA. That is very different, Gustave. There I play before a few persons, a few acquaintances, and here I am to appear before the public.

GUSTAVE. Oh, that comes to the same thing. See, a button is wanting here also. [*He hands her the pantaloons.*]

MATILDA. It is not, after all, so much the idea of appearing before the public that frightens me, but the fear that Uncle Ballast may hear of it.

GUSTAVE. Uncle Ballast! He won't trouble himself much about us. He goes out regularly at dusk every evening, and it is long after midnight before he comes home. For a whole year I have attended every evening the meetings of the Flemish Thespians, and uncle has not the least idea that I belong to them.

MATILDA. Oh, I am not afraid of his finding it out by himself, but some one might tell him.

GUSTAVE. And who could tell him? Who knows you? The Thespians themselves do not know that the actress from Ghent, who is to star it here this evening alone, is my sister.

MATILDA. It was only after receiving your promise to that effect that I agreed to play.

GUSTAVE. Then how could he possibly discover you? See, here a bow is wanting. [*He gives her the garment he has in his hand and gets another out of the trunk.*]

MATILDA. Gustave, let us ask him.

GUSTAVE. To play this evening in the Flemish theatre?

MATILDA. No; only to accompany us thither. [GUSTAVE shrugs his shoulders.] Do you think he would refuse us?

GUSTAVE. Refuse us! That he would, most certainly. Uncle is so Frenchified, and so prejudiced against the Flemish language, that he will not allow any one to speak a word of Flemish in his hearing. Yes, Matilda, all that the Town Council has done against the Flemish tongue, has been at his instigation. I know how busy he has made himself in Brussels.

MATILDA. For all that, I shall feel easier in my mind when I have asked him.

GUSTAVE. Matilda, you are an honorable girl, and if you

feel thus, ask him, and see if you don't catch it. But I hear him coming. Quick, quick, pack up our things, march! [*They throw the garments hurriedly into the trunk. MATILDA opens the door to the right, and GUSTAVE pushes the trunk into the nearest room. MATILDA shuts the door.*]

SECOND SCENE.

MATILDA and BALLAST, coming from the left; later, JOSEPH, through the middle door.

MATILDA. [*Going to meet her uncle.*] Good-morning, dearest uncle. I hope you slept well.

BALLAST. *À merveille*, my dear child. [*He kisses her on the forehead.*] And you?

MATILDA. Very well, uncle; thank you.

BALLAST. You will *déjeuner* with me, will you not?

MATILDA. Excuse me, dear uncle, I could not wait so long. I have already breakfasted with Gustave.

BALLAST. And I, who told Joseph to bring up two *déjeûners*! *Voilà!* there he is with them! [*JOSEPH comes in and sets the table.*] Have you then, *du tout*, no appetite or no thirst?

MATILDA. If you wish it, uncle, I will take a cup of tea, to keep you company.

BALLAST. *À la bonne heure.* [*He takes his seat at table.*]

MATILDA. [*Aside, taking a chair likewise.*] I do it the more willingly, as it will give me an excellent opportunity to speak about the theatre.

BALLAST. *Allons*, niece, *à table*? [*To JOSEPH, while MATILDA is taking her seat.*] Joseph, bring me the *correspondance* which has *arrivé* since yesterday evening.

MATILDA. Uncle, you ought really to take time to eat and drink. You have hardly sat down, and you are already asking for your letters and newspapers.

BALLAST. That is so as not to lose any time, my child. We *hommes d'administration*, as they call us, ought never to be unoccupied.

MATILDA. Yes; but there is no law obliging you to do two works at once.

BALLAST. *Toujours espiègle*, eh! And then while I am reading I cannot converse with you, is that it?

MATILDA. You have guessed it exactly, uncle.

BALLAST. Well? I shall only give a *coup d'œil* to my *correspondance*, and then I am *complètement à vous*. [*To JOSEPH, who is just coming in.*] *Voyons!* [JOSEPH hands him the letters and papers, and goes away.] A *gazette*. I shall not open it to day. Ha! a letter; will you allow me to *décacheter* it? [*He opens it.*] What is that?—Flemish. *Quoi!* A *réclame* against the *enlèvement* of the Flemish signs at the corners of the streets! And do they really think I shall read that trash? *Du tout, du tout!* The time is *passé'd* when a counsellor must read a letter written in that *jargon*. Away with that trash! [*He throws the letter on the table.*] You see, my dear niece, I shall not be *occupé'd* very long this morning. I *expédie* my *affaires* very *lestement*. I must look at this *sous bande*. What do I see? More Flemish! “Cirque Schonburg, National Theatre, Representation.” How can it enter anybody's head to send me a *programme* of a Flemish *spectacle*? [*Laughing.*] Ha, ha, ha!

MATILDA. [*Aside.*] I must seize this opportunity. [*Aloud.*] A Flemish play, did you say, uncle?

BALLAST. Why, yes. *Voyez, Mathilde.*

MATILDA. Yes, truly! And are you not going to it, uncle?

BALLAST. *Vous voulez badiner, Mathilde.* I go to see a Flemish play! I, a counsellor of the city of Brussels!

MATILDA. And I had already counted upon you to accompany us this evening to the Flemish theatre.

BALLAST. Are you speaking *sérieusement*, Matilda?

MATILDA. Certainly, uncle. I am devoted to the Flemish theatre.

BALLAST. My dear Matilda, I should like to do what is *agréable* to you, but I am *forcé'd* to *refuser*. My colleagues would make fun of me.

MATILDA. Your refusal distresses me, dear uncle.

BALLAST. *Allons, allons!* You are childish. But before you go back to Ghent I will take you to the French *Théâtre de la Monnaie*; that is better worth seeing than a Flemish play. But where is your brother, Matilda?

THIRD SCENE.

The preceding and GUSTAVE.

MATILDA. [GUSTAVE comes in through the middle door.] Here he is, uncle.

GUSTAVE. How did you spend the night?

BALLAST. *Merci*, Gustave, I slept *on ne peut mieux*.

MATILDA. Only think, Gustave, a Flemish play is given to-night!

GUSTAVE. Of course I know it, Matilda, and if uncle will allow it I will take you there this evening.

BALLAST. *Quoi!* You talk of going to the Flemish *théâtre!*

MATILDA. Oh, dear uncle, do procure us that pleasure!

BALLAST. *Du tout, du tout!* I am not willing for you to be seen in such company.

GUSTAVE. [*With dignity.*] Uncle!

BALLAST. Well, well! Can you expect to see respectable people where nothing is spoken but Flemish?

GUSTAVE. Uncle, if you knew the Flemish society in Brussels, you would be delighted with it.

BALLAST. And you, my nephew, who speak so warmly in its favor, do you know it?

GUSTAVE. Of course; I belong to it.

BALLAST. So, you belong to it! Then you have probably seen this *réclame* against the *enlèvement* of the Flemish *eti-quettes* at the corners of the streets?

GUSTAVE. I have not only seen it, uncle, but I knew that a copy was to be sent to you.

BALLAST. A copy [*he takes up the letter which he had just received and laid on the table*] which I have not yet taken the trouble to read.

GUSTAVE. You doubtless fear the truths stated therein.

BALLAST. *Futilité, mon cher.* How can it possibly hurt the Flemings to have the names of the streets in Brussels posted up only in French?

GUSTAVE. You seem to forget what Brussels is, uncle. Brussels is the capital of a country in which two-thirds of the inhabitants are Flemish. And the capital belongs to the whole country. Each one, the Fleming as the Frenchman,

the Frenchman as the Fleming, ought to feel at home here. Well! Why do you remove the language spoken by the majority of the people, and leave only that spoken by the minority? Is not that putting the Flemish-Belgian, who comes to Brussels, in a strait? Does it not oblige him to pay a guide, or else to lose a great deal of his precious time in inquiring his way? Yes; I do not hesitate to say that taking away the Flemish signs at the corners of the streets was an act of stupidity, a downright piece of injustice, that the taxpayers in the city ought not to submit to.

BALLAST. *Charmant!* You are an excellent lawyer; but to show you how little *cas* I make of your *raisonnement*, I shall in the *rapport* which I shall make of this petition——

GUSTAVE. Resolve, that the signs shall always be in both languages.

BALLAST. *Du tout!* I shall declare that it is important to efface every letter of the frightful gibberish which you *défendez*.

GUSTAVE. You shall not do that!

BALLAST. And who shall hinder me?

GUSTAVE. I.

BALLAST. You! *Voilà qui est un peu fort!*

GUSTAVE. It is true, nevertheless. And what is more, you shall defend our cause in your *rapport*.

BALLAST. I? Ha, ha! *Comptez là-dessus!*

GUSTAVE. If you grant me one hour, I will convert you.

BALLAST. But—— Have you sworn to drive me mad?

GUSTAVE. Yes; before an hour has passed you will understand that the day must come when the Flemings, who are now carried away by their admiration for everything French, and have lost sight of what is for their own good, will see that the only way to preserve Belgium's nationality is to preserve its own peculiar language.

BALLAST. [*Aside.*] I believe I shall soon lose my wits. [*Aloud.*] I advise you to *débiter* your *beaux discours* elsewhere; here they can only *dégoûter*.

GUSTAVE. Well, you shall judge yourself, uncle. Do you know what the Flemings call a *fransquillon*?

BALLAST. [*In a passion.*] *Fransquillon!* We shall see. Begone, sir, and never let me see you again! [*Aside.*] He called me a *fransquillon*.

MATILDA. [*Anxiously.*] Gustave, do go away.

GUSTAVE. I obey you, uncle; the more readily that I have already said enough.

BALLAST. You have said a great deal too much. Go!

FOURTH SCENE.

BALLAST and MATILDA.

BALLAST. In my whole life I have never seen such an *enragé*.

MATILDA. Forgive him, uncle. He is still so young.

BALLAST. [*Scornfully.*] He is young, *c'est vrai*, but if he continues so he will be still worse when he grows older. And then to dare to *prétender* that I shall make my *rapport* in favor of the Flemish. I! *Allons donc!* I shall soon show him the *contraire*.

MATILDA. [*Frightened.*] Dear uncle, I am so sorry that my brother spoke so incautiously; pray forgive him, I entreat you. Rest assured that he entertains none the less the deepest respect for you, the most profound gratitude.

BALLAST. Yes, yes, *il y paraît*. To call me a *fransquillon*! [*A little softened.*] See, Matilda, he should not have said that, though, to tell the honest truth, he was not so far wrong.

MATILDA. [*Suddenly changing her tone.*] Well, uncle, I have a proposal to make. To prove that you are not quite Frenchified, go with us to the Flemish play-house.

BALLAST. [*Sternly.*] Matilda!

MATILDA. Well, then, let me go with Gustave.

BALLAST. Matilda, leave me in peace and do not worry me any more. [*With emphasis.*] *Je ne le veux pas*. That is my last word. *Allons!* I am going to dress myself, as it is near the time when my *administres* are in the habit of coming to *consulter* me. You know a *conseiller* always has visitors.

MATILDA. [*Kissing him.*] But you will not be angry any more?

BALLAST. Little *friponne*. [*He kisses her on the forehead and goes.*]

FIFTH SCENE.

MATILDA and GUSTAVE.

GUSTAVE. [*Opens the middle door carefully.*] Has he gone, Matilda?

MATILDA. Gustave!

GUSTAVE. [*Drawing nearer.*] Well! how did you like the sauce. Pretty strong of pepper, eh?

MATILDA. Rather too hot.

GUSTAVE. Come, come, it cannot be bad enough. Men like Ballast, who are born Flemings, and who have the confidence of the people, deserve to be treated so. But we will not speak of it any more. We must force him to make a report favorable to the Flemish cause, and you must help me.

MATILDA. I?

GUSTAVE. I must keep my word; and besides, I should like to give Uncle Ballast a practical lesson.

MATILDA. What are you going to do?

GUSTAVE. Why, we will simply rehearse here the parts we are going to perform this evening.

MATILDA. Here?

GUSTAVE. Yes, here. We will let Uncle Ballast, without his knowledge, take the part of the Frenchified city councillor.

MATILDA. Are you dreaming?

GUSTAVE. Come, come, no more time wasted in talking. Go and dress; I will come immediately,—as soon as I have given Joseph my instructions.

SIXTH SCENE.

GUSTAVE and JOSEPH.

GUSTAVE. Joseph, would you like to go this evening to the Flemish theatre?

JOSEPH. I? go to the Flemish theatre? Good heavens! I would almost sell my soul for that!

GUSTAVE. That is not necessary. All you have to do to earn a ticket is to lend me a helping hand.

JOSEPH. [*With delight, pulling up his sleeves.*] In what? I am ready.

GUSTAVE. Not so; I will explain how it is.

JOSEPH. I am all attention.

GUSTAVE. I have just had a hot quarrel with my uncle; he is furious.

JOSEPH. I understand.

GUSTAVE. But if I could once do something to make him laugh, it would all be smoothed over.

JOSEPH. I understand. But what can I do to make him laugh?

GUSTAVE. Not you. I shall try it myself.

JOSEPH. Now, I do not understand at all.

GUSTAVE. That is not necessary. Listen to me.

JOSEPH. I am listening.

GUSTAVE. Six persons are coming to speak to Mr. Ballast.

JOSEPH. One after the other? or——

GUSTAVE. Yes. You will take them in to him. Nothing more.

JOSEPH. I understand. I am just to do what I do every day.

GUSTAVE. Just so; only if you should happen to know one of those persons, you must not let any one suspect it.

JOSEPH. I understand. But, Mr. Gustave, may I ask you something?

GUSTAVE. Be quick, then.

JOSEPH. What are you going to do with all those clothes in that trunk, here in the next room?

GUSTAVE. You shall know that later. And look here, if you pay attention you shall have two tickets instead of one.

SEVENTH SCENE.

JOSEPH, *alone*.

JOSEPH. Two tickets for the Flemish theatre! Would not that be a piece of good luck? Now, I can take Wantje along. Well, well, that would be a pleasure. I think I hear them singing. My goodness, but the rich people who understand French are lucky! They can go to the theatre every day, and we, poor sinners, who don't understand French, we are like outcasts from the city. We have scarcely five or six representations in the whole winter. I am not a politician, but it don't seem fair to me. I have heard that the town gives eighty thousand francs a year to the French theatres, and I have never yet heard that they have given one centime to the Flemish. No, no, that is not fair. Ha! I hear Mr. Ballast; he is certainly coming here. Quick! I must carry off my tea-tray, and then the room is clear.

EIGHTH SCENE.

BALLAST and JOSEPH.

BALLAST. [*Coming in from the left side.*] Is no one arrived, Joseph?

JOSEPH. No one as yet, sir.

BALLAST. *Tant mieux.* Then I can go to work on my rapport. Ha, ha! Mr. Gustave, you look like making me alter my opinion.

JOSEPH. Some one has just rung. Can I show them in, sir?

BALLAST. Yes.

JOSEPH. [*Aside, going out with the tea-tray.*] Is the game beginning already?

NINTH SCENE.

BALLAST, alone.

BALLAST. *Quel ennui* to be *dérangé* so soon. I felt so well disposed for writing; my head was full of good *idées*, *c'est dommage.*

JOSEPH. [*Opening the door and leading MARIANNA in.*] Go in, my good woman.

BALLAST. [*Aside.*] What kind of a *commère* is that?

TENTH SCENE.

BALLAST and MARIANNA; later, JOSEPH.

BALLAST. Who are you?

MARIANNA. I am Marianna Palings, at your service, sir.

BALLAST. A fishwoman, to judge by the smell.

MARIANNA. An honest fishwife from the fish-market, at your service, sir.

BALLAST. Well, Marianna, and what do you want?

MARIANNA. What I want, sir—— Why, I come for your orders.

BALLAST. [*Astonished.*] Orders?

MARIANNA. [*Laughing.*] Why, you don't seem to understand me. With your leave, sir. [*She tries to take a pinch*

out of the snuff-box MR. BALLAST holds in his hands. He succeeds in putting it out of her reach.]

BALLAST. *Eh bien!* what are you doing? You really smell very strong of fish.

MARIANNA. That is true, sir. Every one's smell is according to his trade. But if you will just pay me my cents I will go at once.

BALLAST. Cents! and for what, pray?

MARIANNA. For what! Why, for the fish which my girl brought for your madame, here to your door.

BALLAST. You are certainly mistaken. For one thing, I am not married.

MARIANNA. Well, if you are not married, you may for all that have a madame who does your marketing for you.

BALLAST. [*Impatiently.*] Woman, I tell you again, you are mistaken. You never brought any fish here.

MARIANNA. [*Raising her voice.*] Look here, if you are going to scream, I shall scream too. What do you mean by screaming? I can scream too; and if you think you are going to over-buffalo me, you got up too late, my fine sir. Ha! I should like to see any one outbellow me. Do you understand me?

BALLAST. Well, just tell me, where did you take the fish to?

MARIANNA. Where the fish was carried? Well here, just here. Stone Street. Ha! there is no longer any Flemish sign at the corner of the street, but we all know where Stone Street is. I am born and bred in Brussels, and know the town as well as my "*Our Father*." It would be a pretty story if I did not know Brussels.

BALLAST. Stone Street? *Bon!* but what number?

MARIANNA. Why, the number that stands over your door. A 3, and after it a 9.

BALLAST. That is No. 39.

MARIANNA. Yes, that is No. 39. Well, now, isn't that here?

BALLAST. That was here formerly, but it is not any longer.

MARIANNA. Oh, you wise man! Can the houses run off to another part of the town?

BALLAST. No; but it is possible to *changer* the numbers.

MARIANNA. And why should any one change the num-

bers? Any one who has once stolen on the fish-market is always a thief; and I say, once a number is always a number.

BALLAST. Well now, my good woman, that is *justement* what has deceived you. The numbers have been changed, and this is now No. 60.

MARIANNA. That is all very well. All very fine for rascals who do not want to pay. It is very easy for them to say the number of the house has been changed. Ha! I should not like——

BALLAST. But it is so.

MARIANNA. Yes; and who does all these fine things? That comes certainly from the state-house.

BALLAST. Of course.

MARIANNA. I thought so. You see, sir, that the gentlemen at the state-house don't know what to do to pass their time. They don't need to smell fishy to earn their living! And where has No. 39 gone to?

BALLAST. To the other end of the street, *par là*.

MARIANNA. Well, I will go and look after it; but take care of yourself if I don't find it; you might be the worse for it. I should not like—— *Allo* the door!

BALLAST. *Adieu!* [*He rings. JOSEPH comes in, opens the door, and lets MARIANNA out.*] Joseph!

JOSEPH. [*Comes nearer.*] Sir.

BALLAST. Send some one at once to my sign-painter, and tell him to come immediately and take away the old number from over my door.

JOSEPH. Good, sir.

BALLAST. [*While JOSEPH goes out.*] I had no idea that altering *numéros* could expose me to such unpleasant misunderstanding. *Allons!* let us get to work. *Eh bien!* what is the matter now?

JOSEPH. [*Opens the door again and lets in JEAN PIERRE.*] Go in, my friend.

ELEVENTH SCENE.

BALLAST and JEAN PIERRE; later, JOSEPH.

[JEAN PIERRE, coming in, stammers a few French words.]

BALLAST. What do you want?

JEAN PIERRE. Ha, ha! you can speak Flemish? Ha! I shall probably understand you.

BALLAST. What can I do for you?

JEAN PIERRE. What can you do for me? It is I who should say that, sir. [*He opens his portefeuille and takes out of it a paper, which he hands to MR. BALLAST.*] See, here is the bill of the *houille* which I have furnished you.

BALLAST. My friend, you are mistaken; you have furnished me no coal.

JEAN PIERRE. That is a little too much, really too much; a little too strong.

BALLAST. It is so strong that it is true.

JEAN PIERRE. But, my good friend, I sent you the coal per railway, as you desired.

BALLAST. I did not *commander* anything at all.

JEAN PIERRE. But here I have your letter ordering the coal, and here is the address, *Rue des Pierres*, No. 39.

BALLAST. Well, that is not here.

JEAN PIERRE. So, this isn't the *Rue des Pierres*?

BALLAST. Oh, yes.

JEAN PIERRE. I say so too. I can read, and I have read at the corner of the street a No. 9 and a 30, too.

BALLAST. That was here, but now it has become No. 60.

JEAN PIERRE. How did that happen?

BALLAST. Why, the numbers were changed a few days ago.

JEAN PIERRE. Tell that to somebody else. You are only trying to cheat me, and not pay for the coal. No. 39 stands over your door.

BALLAST. That is true; the old number is still there, but the new one is by it.

JEAN PIERRE. That is none of my business. I must have my pay where I sent my coal.

BALLAST. You are an obstinate fellow; you will not understand me.

JEAN PIERRE. Oh, I understand you well enough, but you pretend not to understand me.

BALLAST. Come, my man, that lasts a little too long. I tell you you are mistaken. You have nothing to claim, and therefore—— [*He rings.*]

JEAN PIERRE. You cannot get off that way.

BALLAST. [*To JOSEPH, who appears at the middle door.*] Take this man and show him No. 39.

JOSEPH. Well, that is here, sir.

JEAN PIERRE. Ha! you see now.

BALLAST. [*Angrily to JOSEPH.*] That was here formerly. Don't you remember that the numbers have been changed?

JOSEPH. To be sure. Yes, I remember it. [*To JEAN PIERRE.*] Come, comrade.

JEAN PIERRE. I don't know if I want to.

JOSEPH. Oh, come along; believe me, I will bring you where you want to go, and if you find that it is not the right place, you can always come back again.

JEAN PIERRE. Ha! You shall not escape me. My son, Pierre Joseph, is waiting for me in the street. I shall put him as a sentinel before your door, and *then* take care of yourself, sir. [*He goes.*]

TWELFTH SCENE.

BALLAST and JOSEPH.

BALLAST. Well, Joseph, is the old number painted over?

JOSEPH. Yes, sir; the paint is nearly dry.

BALLAST. [*Aside.*] So much the better. Now at least there can be no more mistakes. [*Aloud.*] It is well. [*JOSEPH goes.*] Ha! now at last I can *occuper* myself with my *rapport*. *Voyons*, let us attack the Flemings, and show them that it is a *fait accompli*. [*Writing.*] *Messieurs*. [*The bell rings.*] That cursed bell!

JOSEPH. [*Behind the screen, near the middle door.*] Come in, my good woman.

THIRTEENTH SCENE.

BALLAST and TRIEN.

TRIEN. Good-morrow, sir; how well you are looking. I am glad to see it. I am also well. [*She takes a chair and sits down close by MR. BALLAST.*]

BALLAST. [*Pushing away his chair. Aside.*] Dear me, what old witch is this?

TRIEN. [*Drawing nearer him.*] I am a little deaf, sir,

which is the reason I must sit so close by you. You do not know me, sir?

BALLAST. Not at all.

TRIEN. Well, I will tell you why I came. The sister of the niece of the barber of Mynheer's servant told me that you needed a good servant, a person of a certain age, to manage your house, so I have come to ask you if you would not like to engage me.

BALLAST. My good woman——

TRIEN. My name is Trien, sir; Catharina Dobbeleer.

BALLAST. Well, Trien——

TRIEN. Oh, I know what Mynheer is going to say. You are going to say that I am too old. I am not exactly young, that is true. I am sixty-two years old, sir. You would not have thought that, would you? Yes, sir, I am sixty-two years old; but I am still active.

BALLAST. You can use your tongue, too.

TRIEN. Yes, sir; and I can do my work as well as the best of them. See here, sir, are all my certificates. [*She puts some papers in his hand.*] Take your time and read them, sir. You will see that I lived sixteen years with the sexton of Magerhal, twelve years with the burgomaster of Lapschure, and sixteen years with the pastor of Uilekote. May heaven have mercy on his dear soul! I saw them all three die, sir, and made them comfortable in their last moments. Just look at the papers, sir; that is also in it.

BALLAST. But, my good woman——

TRIEN. Oh, you shall not have any cause for complaint, sir. You will never have been better off in your life. I work well, I eat little, and drink also very little.

BALLAST. And you talk very little, also.

TRIEN. Oh, sir, I may have my faults like another, but you will never hear me speak ill of any one.

BALLAST. It is all very well, my good woman, but there is one difficulty.

TRIEN. A difficulty, sir, a difficulty? Mynheer means that it is a pity that I am deaf?

BALLAST. No; I mean that I do not need any maid.

TRIEN. Why could you not say that at once? Mynheer let me tell him everything, and then says he don't need any maid.

BALLAST. That is to say, my good woman, you did not give me time to open my mouth to tell you.

TRIEN. That comes to exactly the same thing. If I do not suit Mynheer, he is free not to take me; but I think it would have been civil in Mynheer to say that before he gave me the trouble of coming here.

BALLAST. What! I?

TRIEN. Yes, you; why did you tell people to get you a maid?

BALLAST. I assure you, my good woman——

TRIEN. Yes, Mynheer finds it very funny to make a fool of me. I am not acquainted in this street; but I was told to come to the *Pjeére Street*, No. 60, to speak to a gentleman who lives here.

BALLAST. [*Aside.*] Good! there we have it again. [*Aloud.*] The *Pjeére Street* you say? That is not here.

TRIEN. That is not here. How is that possible? As I came to the corner of the street I asked a sort of citizen soldier, who stood there staring at the crows, where the *Pjeére Street* was? “*Pjeére, Pjeére,*” said he; “that is just here.”

BALLAST. That is *juste*; it was undoubtedly a *garde-ville*, the Flemings are so stupid. He thought you were speaking French, and this is really the *Rue des Pierres*.

TRIEN. That I should speak French! I never did that in my life; but that is all one. I beg Mynheer's pardon, and would just ask him how I shall find the *Pjeére Street*, where I want to go.

BALLAST. With much *plaisir*. The street is close to the Augustina Church, but so that you need not make any mistake just remember that it is written up *Rue du Cheval*.

TRIEN. How did you say that, sir, *ratteval*?

BALLAST. *Rue du Cheval*.

TRIEN. Oh, I cannot remember that. I never learnt French.

BALLAST. Wait, I will write it for you." [*He writes.*]

TRIEN. That is better, sir, that is better. Oh, what a good man you are! How I should have liked to live with you! I cannot tell you how glad I should have been, and Mynheer would have been *content* with me. I am good at all kinds of work, but if it cannot be that it should be here, there is nothing more to do about it.

BALLAST. Here, my good woman, take care not to lose your address and your certificates. [*He rings.* JOSEPH *opens the door.*]

TRIEN. It is not necessary, sir, I never yet lost anything. Much obliged, sir.

BALLAST. Adieu. [*TRIEN goes.*]

FOURTEENTH SCENE.

BALLAST and JOSEPH.

BALLAST. The old witch has nearly rendered me as crazy as she is herself. One thing is certain: if I had had the least idea of what I should have to endure I should never have labored to have the numbers of the houses changed, and to have the Flemish signs taken away from the corners of the streets. Should that rascal of a Gustave really be in the right? But no; he might boast that he had induced me to change my opinion, and I mean to show him that I have a head of my own. For all that I begin to see that he spoke the truth. Now I can go on with my *rapport*. [*He reads.*] *Messieurs*——

JOSEPH. [*Opening the door.*] Go in, Guard.

FIFTEENTH SCENE.

BALLAST and the GARDE-CHAMPÊTRE.

GUARD. Good-day, sir.

BALLAST. Good morning, *Champêtre*. Where do you come from?

GUARD. I come from Goyek.

BALLAST. From Goyek! And what can I do for you?

GUARD. Well, sir, I come about that business. You know what.

BALLAST. Indeed, I do not.

GUARD. You act as if you really did not know.

BALLAST. [*Aside.*] Can there be another mistake? [*Aloud.*] Explain yourself, *Champêtre*.

GUARD. I recognize you very well, sir, though you are dressed differently from what you were.

BALLAST. And I do not recognize you, my friend. I never saw you. I have no idea what you want.

GUARD. Then you have no long *memorie*, sir. Then you no longer know that I *attrappéd* you last Sunday, hunting on a piece of land belonging to our burgomaster.

BALLAST. [*Aside.*] I thought so.

GUARD. And you said, *Champpêtre*, let it be now and come next week to my house.

BALLAST. Friend, I am sorry, but I was never in Goyck in my life. I have not even the slightest idea where Goyck is.

GUARD. Could I be mistaken? Will you be so good as to see if that is not your direction? You ought to know it better than I. [*He takes a piece of paper out of his pocket and holds it before BALLAST'S eyes.*]

BALLAST. [*Reads.*] Pieren Street, No. 60.

GUARD. Well, sir, is that you or not?

BALLAST. No, my friend, it is not here. We are here in the Stone Street.

GUARD. Wrong? in the Stone Street? No, no, I am not wrong. I can read, sir, or how else could I be a *garde-champpêtre*. I can also reckon and write. Well, I am not wrong. I read very distinctly at the corner of the street, on a sky-blue sign printed in white letters, *Rue des*, that was French, and then in Flemish *Pier*, and then an *S* for street, as I suppose there was not room enough on the sign to write it out in full. Now, you see, sir, that I am not wrong.

BALLAST. All that gibberish cannot help you. You are in the *Rue des Pierres*, which means in Flemish Stone Street.

GUARD. So, that means Stone Street. Well, why don't they write it up by it?

BALLAST. [*Aside.*] He is right. [*Aloud.*] Why, why? because it is not necessary.

GUARD. Well, I find it to the *contraria* very necessary. It is not every one who comes to Brussels who knows French.

BALLAST. You have talked enough. You are wrong, and that is the end of it.

GUARD. And where is, then, the Pieren Street, where you say that I ought to be?

BALLAST. Close by the High Street.

GUARD. High Street. Ha, ja! but the High Street, how do you say that in French? For if I do not know that I cannot find it.

BALLAST. *La Rue Haute.*

GUARD. *Ar u Ot.* That sounds as if one was hallooing to the oxen in the plough. Wait, let me write it down, or I shall forget it. [*He dips a pen in the ink and writes.*] *Ar u Ot.* And now how do you say the Pieren Street?

BALLAST. *La Rue des Vers.*

GUARD. *Ar u Veer* do you say? I believe Mynheer is making fun of me. I am a peasant, sir; a peasant and a *garde-champêtre*; but a veer cannot be a pier.

BALLAST. Have you nearly finished?

GUARD. You must not get angry, sir; but in France *veer* (feathers) cannot be *pieren* (worms).

BALLAST. Come, come, that has lasted long enough. [*He rings. JOSEPH appears.*]

GUARD. Look here, sir, I am not going to be put out of the house by your servant. I can go out very well by myself. [*To JOSEPH.*] Tell me, friend, is it far to the street *Ar u Veer*?

JOSEPH. I cannot tell you.

GUARD. Well, then, to the street *Ar u Ot*?

JOSEPH. I cannot tell you that either. I do not know the town very well, *Champêtre*.

BALLAST. Are you going?

GUARD. Yes, sir. *Ar u Ot.* [*He departs accompanied by JOSEPH.*]

SIXTEENTH SCENE.

BALLAST, *alone.*

BALLAST. Have you ever in your life seen such a comedy? The farther it went the finer it was. Yes, yes, I must say that I have received a good lesson, and, *malgré moi*, I must say that my nephew was right about his Flemish. It was really imprudent to take away the Flemish names from the corners of the streets. And that horrid *rapport*, I do not know any longer where I was. [*Some one knocks at the door.*] *Entrez.*

SEVENTEENTH SCENE.

BALLAST and WANTJE; later, JOSEPH.

BALLAST. [*Aside.*] What is that now? [*Aloud.*] Well, my good woman, what do you want?

WANTJE. Why, sir, I come on account of my sister, who sends you back your child.

BALLAST. [*Surprised.*] My child!

WANTJE. Yes; the child you gave her to nurse.

BALLAST. What do you say?

WANTJE. Oh, sir, that ought not to surprise you, as you no longer pay for it.

BALLAST. [*Shrugging his shoulders.*] Woman, I do not know what you mean.

WANTJE. [*Raising her voice.*] Ah! so you do not know what I mean?

BALLAST. For heaven's sake do not talk so loud!

WANTJE. [*Talking very loud.*] What I have to say is very simple. I bring your child back, because you no longer pay for it.

BALLAST. Hush, I tell you! [*He looks around him very much frightened.*]

WANTJE. [*Still shouting.*] Ha! I suppose *Madame* is not to know anything about it?

BALLAST. I tell you again to hush! and get you gone out of my sight!

WANTJE. The sooner the better, Mynheer; but you should at least relieve me of this burden.

BALLAST. I have nothing to do with those rags.

WANTJE. Neither do I and my sister, and therefore take it.

BALLAST. Well, I tell you that the child is not mine.

WANTJE. We do not mean to have anything more to do with it.

BALLAST. Take it back to the people who gave it to you to nurse.

WANTJE. You gave it to us to nurse.

BALLAST. I?

WANTJE. Of course; the gentleman from the Stone Street, No. 60.

BALLAST. [*Aside.*] Of course she takes the new number for the old one.

WANTJE. So it seems you do not deny it any longer?

BALLAST. [*Bewildered.*] Woman, it is not here that you want to go.

WANTJE. That is your game, is it? You want to get me outside of the door; but I am not such a fool.

BALLAST. [*Impatiently.*] It is not here that you want to go.

WANTJE. Yes, it is exactly here that I want to go. The woman in the corner shop has certainly spent a great deal on the child, as well as I.

BALLAST. You wretch! You have already made it known in the town, and my good name——

WANTJE. We thought it was the Madame's child.

BALLAST. Hush, I tell you! and get out of my house with the brat!

WANTJE. If I go, it will be without the child. Here, take it.

BALLAST. For heaven's sake, woman, don't torture me any longer!

WANTJE. Take it, I say, or I will throw it at your feet. [*She has raised the child.* BALLAST involuntarily holds out his arms; she puts the child in them, and rushes out of the room as JOSEPH comes in.]

BALLAST. Joseph, Joseph! Bring her back, bring her back!

JOSEPH. [*Laughing.*] That is impossible, sir; she runs at least as fast as the *vapeur*.

BALLAST. What difference does that make? Run after her! There, take the child, and if you do not find the woman, take it to the old No. 60. [*He puts the child in JOSEPH's arms.*] I shall die of vexation!

EIGHTEENTH SCENE.

JOSEPH, and later BALLAST.

JOSEPH. [*Alone.*] Run after her! That is soon said, but not so quickly done. I might, perhaps, run during my whole life without finding that woman again. It is much better to stand still and hold the child. But what am I going to do with it? That is master's business. I wonder if it is really his child? I don't believe it, but he is fast anyhow. Good gracious, how heavy such a tiny creature is! I have no more feeling in my arms. I should make a bad child's nurse. Wait! how is it they carry the little things? [*He takes it very uncomfortably in one arm.*] If it only don't begin to cry! I feel it stirring. [*He rocks it in his arms.*] If I

could only remember a nursery song! [*He sings, "Sleep, baby bunting, your dad's gone a-hunting."*] I wonder if it is a boy or a girl? It gets heavier every minute! Wait, we'll spring a little. *Hopp!* [*He throws it so awkwardly over his shoulder that the child falls off its pillow. He gives a loud scream and jumps aside.*] Ah, good heavens, there it lies! But what do I see? [*He bursts out in a loud laugh.*] Ha, ha! a piece of wood wrapped in swaddling-clothes! What can that mean? Ah! now I have it. That is one of the persons of whom Mr. Gustave spoke. [*He throws it into the room on the right.*] I will remove all that could betray him.

BALLAST. [*Coming in anxiously from the left side.*] Well, Joseph, did you put the child in the right place?

JOSEPH. [*Wiping the sweat from his forehead.*] Yes, sir; but it was not without trouble.

BALLAST. [*Aside.*] Thank heaven! [*Aloud.*] It is well; leave me. [*JOSEPH goes out laughing.*]

NINETEENTH SCENE.

BALLAST, alone.

BALLAST. *Allons, allons!* I must acknowledge that I have committed a *sottise*—a *double sottise*—of which I am the first victim. I shall not again be so foolishly French. As regards the names of the streets, I shall propose to-day putting up the Flemish names alongside of the French. About the unfortunate numbers on my house—— [*He rings.*]

TWENTIETH SCENE.

BALLAST and JOSEPH.

BALLAST. Joseph, go to my sign-painter and tell him——

JOSEPH. That he must come and paint over the new number?

BALLAST. Hush; *mauvais plaisant!*

JOSEPH. [*Aside.*] Yes, it is certainly *plaisant*.

BALLAST. Tell him I want him to come and paint over my door—— Wait, I will write it out for him. [*He writes.*] No. 39 in an *accolade*, old, *ancien*, and No. 60 also with an *accolade*, new, *nouveau*.

JOSEPH. [*Aside.*] He is a good deal changed. [*Aloud.*] Would it not be well to put, sir, since when one is old and one new?

BALLAST. Hush, I say, and go!

JOSEPH. [*Who had gone out, comes back again.*] There are other persons there who wish to speak to you.

BALLAST. Tell them I have no time now; they can come back to-morrow.

JOSEPH. Yes, sir.

BALLAST. [*To JOSEPH as he goes out.*] And mind, Joseph, and be sure and ask if it is really for me that they come. Of all the people that were here to-day, there was not a single one who wanted me.

JOSEPH. Yes, sir; but that is certainly not my fault.

BALLAST. Go! [*JOSEPH goes.*]

TWENTY-FIRST SCENE.

BALLAST, *alone.*

BALLAST. No, it is not his fault; it is *mine*. But my *rapport*! *Diable*! I had forgotten it. And yet it is high time that I should write it. [*A terrible noise is heard outside of the door.*] What can that be?

TWENTY-SECOND SCENE.

BREAKHALS *and* BALLAST.

BREAKHALS. [*Who has forced the door open.*] And who shall hinder me from coming in? By all the devils in hell—
[*To BALLAST.*] Ha! there you are, my fine gentleman! And so you thought to escape from the effects of my anger?

BALLAST. [*Aside.*] What kind of a bullying fellow is this?

BREAKHALS. Ha! I see you tremble. But don't think to escape me!

BALLAST. Sir!

BREAKHALS. All your whining and begging won't help you. You were not trembling when you insulted me yesterday as we came out of the theatre, so you need not tremble now when I come to call you to account for it.

BALLAST. I insult you? I?

BREAKHALS. So you know nothing about it? You are a good actor!

BALLAST. I assure you, sir, there is some misunderstanding.

BREAKHALS. You did not say that yesterday! Ha! I tore up the card you threw me in the dark, when you slipped through the crowd and ran off.

BALLAST. My card, you say?

BREAKHALS. Yes, your card! There was no address on it, but I learned from others that you lived Stone Street, No. 60.

BALLAST. That accursed confusion of numbers again!

BREAKHALS. You did not think I could find you out, did you?

BALLAST. Sir!

BREAKHALS. No evasion! I have been insulted, and come now to ask for satisfaction. You cannot refuse me. Name your weapons. Here are pistols and here are swords. Choose; it is the same to me.

BALLAST. A duel!

BREAKHALS. Yes; what is there alarming in that? A duel does not frighten me. I have already sent thirty-two men into the other world: you shall be the thirty-third. Come!

BALLAST. Good heavens! I assure you——

BREAKHALS. Are you skilful in feints?

BALLAST. I never had a sword in my hand. But——

BREAKHALS. Then I should really have it a little too much my own way: one, two, three——

BALLAST. But, sir——

BREAKHALS. Perhaps you prefer pistols.

BALLAST. I never fired a shot.

BREAKHALS. And I can shoot a pipe out of a peasant's mouth at twenty-five paces. Come along; it won't last long.

BALLAST. But you don't mean to murder me in cold blood?

BREAKHALS. Now, since you have chosen pistols, we will fire at five paces. One—two—three! One, shoots! One, good-evening, and all is over.

BALLAST. But listen to me.

BREAKHALS. Come along! [*He takes him by the arm and drags him towards the door.*]

BALLAST. For heaven's sake let me loose! I will tell you!

BREAKHALS. What can you possibly have to say to me? Excuses? I shall not accept them. That we have no seconds? It is not necessary that, on our account, any one should be brought up before the court. That you must put your affairs in order before you leave this world? That is possible. [*He lets him loose.*] Well, I will go and wait for you. In two hours from now in the Teskamer Wood; and, if you do not meet me there, I shall come here and shoot you through the head. So, in two hours! Do you hear? [*He rushes off.*]

BALLAST. The man is stark mad! Joseph! Joseph!

TWENTY-THIRD SCENE.

BALLAST and JOSEPH.

JOSEPH. [*Coming in hastily.*] Good heavens! What is the matter, sir? You are pale; you tremble! You do not look like yourself!

BALLAST. Ah, Joseph! He wants to murder me.

JOSEPH. Who?—the wild beast who forced his way in here after he had given me a good beating?

BALLAST. Yes, yes! But now you will stand by me, will you not?

JOSEPH. Of course I shall. But it cannot be so bad.

BALLAST. Joseph, go and fasten the front door with the night-lock. Put up the chains and push the bolts. Let no one come in to-day. Call my nephew; call my niece. They must watch with you and me.

JOSEPH. I run, sir.

BALLAST. Don't stay long, Joseph.

JOSEPH. Be easy, sir. [*He goes.*]

TWENTY-FOURTH SCENE.

BALLAST; afterwards MATILDA, GUSTAVE, and JOSEPH.

BALLAST. [*Alone.*] Easy, do you say? And how could I be easy in a house which is haunted? Oh, I will not live here any longer!

MATILDA. [*Hurries in.*] What has happened, dear uncle?

BALLAST. What has happened, my dear niece? Why, that since this morning I have been the football of some infernal combination. And, at last, a mad fellow came in and wanted to murder me!

MATILDA. To murder you!

GUSTAVE. [*Rushes in.*] What do I hear, uncle? An impudent fellow has challenged you to fight a duel?

BALLAST. I have the choice between fighting a duel and being murdered in my own house when he comes back.

GUSTAVE. I would like to see him touch you when I am here.

BALLAST. Oh, then do not go away from me!

GUSTAVE. Not one step, uncle!

BALLAST. Now I recognize you as my dutiful and loving nephew, spite of our quarrel this morning.

GUSTAVE. Uncle!

BALLAST. But a quarrel is no longer possible between us, as I have become a Fleming again.

GUSTAVE. Uncle! Are you in earnest?

BALLAST. Here is my hand on it,—the hand of a Fleming. Is anything more necessary to convince you?

GUSTAVE. Certainly not.

BALLAST. And to prove to you that my conversion is sincere, I shall make a favorable *rapport* on your petition.

GUSTAVE. Uncle, I thank you in my own name and that of your fellow-countrymen. But——

BALLAST. Do you want anything more? Speak out.

GUSTAVE. [*With emphasis.*] I feel obliged to say that, if you and your colleagues grant the Flemish part of the population the justice to which they are entitled, it is because——

BALLAST. [*Aside.*] What can he mean? [*Aloud.*] Speak out, my boy; speak out.

GUSTAVE. In a word, you were enlightened as to your duty by a French *houille* man, by the *garde-champêtre* of Goyek, and by Mr. Breakhals.

MATILDA. And by the fishwife Marianna, old Trien, and the peasant girl Wantje. [GUSTAVE and MATILDA laugh aloud.]

BALLAST. [*Displeased.*] Well!—*Eh bien!*—What are you laughing at?

GUSTAVE. Will you forgive us, uncle?

BALLAST. Explain, explain!

GUSTAVE. Read the title of this play. [*He shows him the programme lying on the table.*]

BALLAST. [*Reads.*] "Rue des Pierres, No. 60." My house!

GUSTAVE. Your house? There is nothing to show if it is the old or new number.

BALLAST. What does that mean?

MATILDA. Why, it means that we have just given you a repetition of the play.

BALLAST. That is to be played this evening in the Flemish theatre?

GUSTAVE. By your dutiful nephew and niece.

BALLAST. What! you as *acteurs*?

MATILDA. No one will recognize us. You did not yourself.

BALLAST. That is true. But it was through deceit you converted me.

GUSTAVE. Uncle, you surely will not recall the promise that you wanted to strengthen with an oath?

BALLAST. *Allons!* Yes; I will keep my word.

GUSTAVE and MATILDA. Dearest uncle! [*They embrace him.*]

JOSEPH. [*Who has slipped in unnoticed, aside.*] Good! They are friends again. [*He comes forward.*] Mr. Gustave, please to give me my two tickets for the Flemish play.

GUSTAVE. [*Giving them to him.*] Here; you have earned them.

BALLAST. What! Was that rascal also in the plot?

JOSEPH. Yes, sir, I played, too; and so did you.

BALLAST. Well, Gustave, I will come this evening and see your representation. I am *curieux* to see what *effet* my *personnage* will make.

MATILDA. Do, uncle. We shall all play twice as well. [*She kisses him.*]

XIII.

TWELVE PORTUGUESE LEGENDS.

FROM THE ROMANCEIRO PORTUGUEZ, BY VICTOR EUGENIO HARDING, AND THE EPOPEAS MOÇARABAS, BY TEOFILO BRAGA.

TRANSLATED FROM THE PORTUGUESE

BY MRS. FRANCES C. HENDERSON.

1. THE LEGEND OF PASSO DE RONCESVAL.

THE king ordered them to count his knights and see who was missing. There was only one missing,—Dom Beltrao,—but he was one of the bravest and strongest. They drew lots who should go to seek him. The one on whom it fell turned his horse's head without saying a word. He went alone, and sought day and night, and wept all the time. He asked the shepherds on his way, "Have you seen a knight in white armor mounted on a pied horse?" They always answered "No," so he went on and on till he came to the Pass of Roncesval. He was ready to drop with fatigue, but he sought among all the dead, who were lying there in heaps. No Beltrao was among them. He saw a Moor, and said to him,—

"For the love of heaven, good Moor, tell me if a knight in white armor has passed this way? Tell me if he is languishing anywhere in captivity?"

"Tell me, my friend," said the Moor, "by what signs I should know him?"

"His armor was white, his horse was pied, and on the point of his lance he carried a knot of white ribbon, a token from his lady-love."

"That knight, my friend," said the Moor, "lies here in the ford; his feet are in the water, his head on the sand. He has seven mortal wounds: the one lets in the sun, another lets in the moon, and by the smallest of all his blood could have ebbed away; and yet the cause of his death was neither the foe nor the sword, but his horse, who would not jump over the fallen dead."

Who ever witnessed such a miracle? The horse, though nearly dead, opened his mouth and spoke, "Don't blame me! Three times I tried to save him,—three times I prepared to jump. He always renewed the fight, and I fell with this deadly wound."

2. THE LEGEND OF THE SHIP OF SAINT CATHARINE.

SUPPOSED TO REFER TO THE VOYAGE OF COUNT JORGE DE ALBUQUERQUE COELHO, MADE FROM BRAZIL, A.D. 1565.

"Mount, sailor; mount to the top of the mainmast, and see if you discover the land of Spain, the meadows of Portugal."

"I do not see the land of Spain nor the meadows of Portugal. I only see seven swords ready to kill you."

"Mount, boatswain; mount to the top of the foremast, and see if there is naught of Spain, naught of Portugal, in view."

"Oh, yes; I see them both, and I see three lovely maids under an orange-tree. One is sewing, one is spinning, and one—the fairest of all—stands in the middle and weeps."

"They are all three my daughters. If I could only kiss them! Bring me safe to land, and the fairest of all shall be your bride."

"I do not want your daughter; I do not care for a bride."

"I will give you so much gold,—more than you will care to count."

"I do not care for gold; I have no use for it."

"I will give you my white charger, who has no equal for speed."

"I do not care for your charger; keep it and ride it yourself."

"I will give you the good ship 'Catharine': you can sail all over the world."

"Keep your good ship 'Catharine.' I want other pay."

"What guerdon, then, shall I give you if you bring me safe to land?"

"Captain, give me your soul; that alone I can use."

"Avaunt, Satan, who hadst taken this form to tempt me! My soul belongs to God, my body I give to the waves."

An angel took him under the arms and did not let him sink. The demon fled with the whirlwind, and the sea and the air grew calm, and that night the good ship "Catharine" was riding at anchor in port.

3. THE LEGEND OF DONNA MARIA.

There was a king who had a daughter, and her name was Donna Maria. She was in love with a captain, who loved her equally well. Her father found it out, and locked her up on bread and water. He called for all the ship-carpenters, and ordered them to make a ship on which Donna Maria could be sent out to sea. There were so many at work that they built the ship in a day. The king put provisions on it for seven years and a day, and turned Donna Maria adrift in it, alone and without sails or oars.

She drifted a long time, till she came to an uninhabited island where there was no living soul but a holy hermit.

"Who brought you here, woman," said the hermit, "to make me lose my soul?"

"Indeed, I do not wish to make you lose your soul, most holy hermit. The wind that blew me here," said she, "can blow me back again. Blow, wind, blow, and be obedient, ye waves, and take me where I would wish to be,—take me back to my own country."

While the king was sitting at lunch in the middle of the day, he saw a ship enter the port without sails and without rowers.

"Who is that," said he, "who is sailing so boldly in without license?"

"Why, it is your daughter, Donna Maria."

"If it is my daughter, I will go and see her."

"My daughter," said he, "how did you pass the sea?"

"The waves rolled smoothly under me and the winds wafted me courteously. The angels kept me company; one kept guard over me by day and one by night. And the Virgin called me her handmaid Maria."

4. THE LEGEND OF THE BELLA INFANTA.

The beautiful Infanta was sitting in her garden, combing her hair with a comb of gold. Raising her eyes, she saw a troop of soldiers with a fine-looking captain marching in front of them. She called to him, and said, "Oh, most noble captain, did you not meet my husband somewhere in the Holy Land?"

He replied, "Tell me some sign by which to distinguish him. There are so many knights in the Holy Land."

"He rode," said she, "a white horse, with a saddle of cloth of gold, and on the point of his lance he carried the cross of Christ."

"By those signs I know that I saw him die, and that I revenged his death on the infidels."

"Ah, poor me! I am then a widow, and I have three unmarried daughters."

"What would you give, senhora, to him who could bring the knight back again?"

"I would give him gold and fine linen and all the riches I have."

"I care not for gold and silver, neither for linen fine; but what would you give, senhora, to him who could bring the knight back again?"

"I would give you my three mills, which make flour so fine and rare."

"I do not care for your mills or flour. What could you give me more if I brought the good knight back again?"

"I would give you my three daughters,—one to burnish your arms, one to be your maid, and the handsomest to be your wife."

"Your daughters, Infanta, are no ladies for me. You must give me more than that if I am to bring your husband back again."

"I have nothing more to give, and you nothing more to ask."

"All this is nothing, senhora, unless you give me yourself."

"You are no cavalier, for you keep asking more and more. I will make my servants tie you to the tail of my horse, and drive him round the garden."

Then he said, "Where is the other half of this ring with seven stones, which I divided with you? Here is my half." And then she knew it was her husband.

5. THE LEGEND OF COUNT ALVEZ.

The king of Castile found his daughter Sylvana crying bitterly, and asked her what was the matter. "Why," replied she, "my three sisters are married and have families. I, who am the handsomest, must be an old maid."

"There is no one," said the father, "who is of a sufficiently good family to marry you except Count Alvez, and he is married and has children."

"He is the very one I wanted," said Sylvana. "Send and call him, father, in your name and mine."

"Hurry!" said the king to a servant. "Go and call Count Alvez!"

The count came in haste, and, with many bows, asked what was the king's pleasure.

"You must kill the countess immediately," said he, "and marry my daughter."

"I cannot kill the countess myself," said he, "because she does not deserve death; but I will send some men to kill her, and let the wolves eat her."

"You must kill her yourself, Count Alvez, and bring me her head on this gold dish. You must not think to deceive me by bringing some other head for hers. She has a mole on her right cheek, which I should recognize at once."

The good count went home very sad, and had his doors bolted,—a thing he never did,—and said no strangers should be admitted to dinner. He wept incessantly, so that his tears ran down on the table.

His wife, noticing it, said, "My dear count, what causes this melancholy? Tell me what makes you so sad, and I will cheer you up with pleasant tales."

"How can I tell you my troubles? The king has ordered me to kill you, and to marry his daughter."

"Don't do it, dear count," said she, "for I do not deserve death. Have me thrown into the sea, and let the fishes eat me."

"That is not possible, countess, as the wise king has ordered

that your head shall be brought to him on this golden dish ; and he says I cannot send another head instead of yours, as you have a mole on your right cheek, which he would recognize instantly."

"Oh, then," said she, "let me take a walk in the garden, and say farewell to the roses and lilies ; and let me nurse my darling boy once more."

So she took her baby, and sang, "Drink, my darling, drink this milk of bitterness. To-morrow, at this hour, your father will wear a crown : to-morrow, at this hour, I shall be in my grave."

The next day the king was knocking at the door, saying, "If the countess is not yet dead, I have come to kill her myself."

"Oh !" was the mournful reply. "The countess died for crimes that she had committed ; the count died this morning at ten ; the baby he died at twelve. God did not wish to part a loving couple."

6. THE LEGEND OF DONA ALDONÇA.

A stream of clear water ran by Dona Aldonça's door. Every woman who drank of that stream immediately became a mother. Dona Aldonça drank in an unfortunate hour ; and once, as she sat at table, her father said, eying her sternly, "I think you must have drank of that stream."

"Oh, no, father," said she ; "it is only that my dress fits so badly."

"Well," said he, "if it be the fault of the dress, let it be burnt at once. Go to your room, Aldonça ; and never appear again in a dress so badly made !"

Dona Aldonça retired to her room, and after some time a baby lay in her arms. "Run," said she to her maid, "and see who is passing in the court-yard."

"Don't be displeased, my lady," said the maid, "but it is your rich cousin, Valdirinos."

So she sent and had him called. When he came, he said, "What can I do for you, fair cousin ?"

She replied, "Take this baby, and give it to some one to bring up for me ; but let it be so arranged that I shall have no trouble except paying for her."

As he went down the steps he met his uncle, and said, "Good-morning, uncle of my soul."

"Oh, nephew of my heart, what are you carrying under your cloak?"

"Only some green bananas,—the fancy of an invalid."

"Give me one or two, that I may see if they will soon be ripe."

"I cannot; they are counted."

Just then the babe began to cry. "Begone with you, Valdirinos, ruin of my house! If you were not my nephew, I would kill you and burn your cousin alive!"

"I do not care if you kill me, neither do I care if she be burnt, only I would like to prove her innocence."

"If I kill Dona Aldonça, she is my adored daughter. If I kill Valdirinos, then my daughter is dishonored. I would rather you should marry at once."

They went to Dona Aldonça, who was shedding tears of grief. When her father gave her her baby, and told her she was to marry her cousin, she shed tears of joy.

7. THE LEGEND OF DOM GAYFEIROS.

Dom Gayfeiros was sitting at the table playing dice. As he held them in his hand his uncle came in, and said, "Instead of playing at dice you had better be looking for your poor wife."

"I spent seven years seeking her," said Gayfeiros,— "four on land and three on the waves of the sea. I went over mountains and valleys without even stopping to rest. I had to eat raw meat, and to slake my thirst with blood. And now how could I seek her without arms or horse, as I have lent both to my cousin Montezinhos to go to the tournament in Hungary? If you will lend me yours, I am willing to begin again."

"Melisendra has been a captive for seven years," said the uncle, "and you have always had arms and horses. I made a vow at San Joao de Latrao never to lend mine to anybody who had ever proved himself a coward."

As soon as Dom Gayfeiros heard this he pulled out his sword, and said, "Do you wish to insult me, Dom Roldao?"

The Admiral Dom Guarino came to separate them, and

Dom Roldao smiled, and said, "I am willing to accompany you myself, nephew; but, if you prefer it, I will send you my arms and horse."

Dom Gayfeiros started, and travelled till he came to the land of the Moors; and then he felt very sad to think of his wife being captive in their hands. He did not know how to get within the gates of the town of Sansonha. Suddenly the gates opened, and the king and his cavaliers came out to hunt. Gayfeiros spied a Christian captive just going to his work, and said to him, "God bless you, Christian captive, can you tell me if you have heard of a Christian lady, of high lineage, who is captive here, and spends her time in weeping?"

"Yes," said the captive; "she is here in this palace. Take this street to the right, which leads to the royal palace, and you will doubtless see her behind the blinds."

He did as he was told, and walked up and down the street under the windows.

"Oh, what a handsome cavalier!" said one of the attendants.

Melisendra, hearing this, began to weep. She could not recognize her husband in a different armor; but the mere sight of a knight reminded her of her distant home, so she called to him, "Sir knight! if you go to France, will you take a message for me? Ask Dom Gayfeiros why he does not come to set me free. Is he afraid of the Moors, or has he another love? I, a poor captive, spend my time in weeping. If you will not tell Dom Gayfeiros, tell Dom Beltrao, or my father, the emperor, to send for me, as they wish to force me to be a renegade and to deny Christ; and then I am to marry a Moorish king."

"You must give this message yourself, senhora," said Dom Gayfeiros, "for I am here, and have come to liberate you."

He had hardly spoken these words when she jumped from the balcony into his arms. The accursed Moor who was keeping watch, called out, "Come to Melisendra! the Christians wish to steal her!"

"Melisendra, my wife, how can we escape?"

• "God and the Virgin Mary must protect us."

He settled the breastplate and bit of his horse, and, putting his wife behind him so that she could hold on to him, he

dug the spurs into his horse till the blood flowed. He flew so that no one could overtake them. The Moors in the town ran about screaming, and shut all the gates. Seven times Gayfeiros made the tour, at the eighth his horse jumped over the wall. They had already lost sight of the walls of the town, when they came upon King Almansor returning with his cavaliers. Then Dom Gayfeiros said to his wife, "Do not be frightened, Melisendra; but you must get down and wait for me a while under these green trees. Here I must try my good arms."

Melisendra got down and began to pray, and the horse immediately charged the Moors. He was so tired from the rapid flight that he could hardly stand, but as soon as he saw the Moors he seemed to lose all feeling of fatigue, and if Dom Gayfeiros fought well the horse fought still better. They killed so many of the infidels that the field was swimming in blood. At last King Almansor, seeing this, began to swear by Allah and Mahomet.

"Christian," said he, "there is no one who can equal thee in the fight. Who art thou? Urgel de Nantes, or the Infant Dom Guarim, or perhaps Dom Roldao himself?"

Dom Gayfeiros, hearing him, called out,—

"Hush, Moorish king; do not speak thus. There are many knights in France equal to those you have mentioned. I am the Infant Dom Gayfeiros, nephew of Dom Roldao."

The king did not wish to hear any more, but, turning his horse's head, he went and shut himself up in Sansonha.

* As there was no longer any one to fight, Gayfeiros remained lord of the field. Full of joy, he went to join Melisendra.

"Are you hurt, husband?" said she. "You must be, for there were so many Moors and you were the only one on your side."

"Oh, no," replied Gayfeiros; "I have not a single wound. This is the armor of my Uncle Roldao, through which no sword can cut."

They travelled a long time before they entered a Christian land, but the way seemed short to them, talking of their loves. When they arrived in Paris the whole court came out to meet them, as the emperor wished to embrace his daughter. There were the twelve peers of France and ladies

without number, Donna Alda and Dom Roldao and the admiral of the sea, Archbishop Turpin and Dom Julio, the good old Dom Beltrao, and all others about the court. Great honor was paid to Dom Gayfeiros, who had given such proofs of valor.

8. THE LEGEND OF THE YARAVI OF PADRE LERSUNDI.

This priest was excommunicated because, without regard to his sacred vows, he fell madly in love with one of his parishioners. She died and was buried, but Padre Lersundi bribed the grave-digger to take her up on the following night and bring her secretly to his house. When he received her he placed her in a chair, surrounded by lighted wax tapers, and began to make her declarations of love, varied by groans and sighs. When decay set in and he was obliged to part with her, he buried her in his own house. Previously, so as not to give her up entirely, he detached a thigh-bone, and made of it a simple flute with five holes. On that he played dirges, which froze the marrow in the bones of those who heard them. At the end of five days all was still: the neighbors, hearing no noise, broke open the door, and found the poor man lying dead with his flute in his hand.

Words set to the mournful music he played are still sung as a national ballad in parts of Peru.

9. THE LEGEND OF JOAO, ABBOT OF SAM BENTO.

It was during the wars with the Moors that many cavaliers and captains took refuge in the fortress of Coimbra, in Portugal, with their wives, their children, and their goods, from the Moors, who were coming to attack them under King Almançor de Cordova. This king was advancing with one hundred thousand soldiers to try to destroy the little remnant which had remained faithful to the Cross. For three years the handful of valiant cavaliers resisted all the efforts of the vast army of the Moslems. Their patroness and helper was an image of the Holy Virgin, which was venerated in the chapel of their leader, the abbot of Sam Bento. This man,

seeing that all their provisions were consumed, as well as their ammunition, and that nothing short of a miracle could save the city, called a meeting of the most influential of the captains. He represented to them the great danger there was that their wives and children should fall into the hands of the infidels, and he induced to renounce their religion in order to save their lives; so he proposed that they should kill them all, and then rush upon the enemy and sell their own lives dearly. They all agreed to his proposal, and, after poniarding their wives and children, set fire to the city and all it contained. They themselves rushed out naked against the Moors, and fought with such desperate valor that they killed ninety thousand of the enemy, and returned to the castle laden with spoils. They were bowed down with grief for the death of their wives and children, but God himself comforted them, for at the gates they were met by them all in a procession, headed by the Virgin Mary, who had restored them to life, and whose own neck showed as well as theirs the marks of the bloody dagger.

10. THE LEGEND OF THE MAIDENS OF SIMANCA.

The town of Simanca was originally called *Gureba*. The Moors, after conquering it, imposed upon it an annual tribute of seven young maidens, who were to be sent to the Caliph's seraglio. These were to be decided by lot. One year the seven who had been thus set apart all cut off their hands, and when the Moors came to receive the tribute they showed the raw stumps, and said, "Without hands you cannot use us." The Moors replied, "*Si, manca* (yes, handless); we will take you." The populace, touched by the virtue of the damsels, attacked the Moors, and killing them all, set the maidens free. In commemoration of this victory and the heroic act of the maidens, they changed the name of the town to Simanca, and took as the city arms two hands.

11. THE LEGEND OF CARRIAO.

A church was erected in Carriao to Our Lady of Victory, in commemoration of the wondrous miracle by which she

set free some maidens whom the Moors were carrying off. When they arrived at this place, where a large drove of cattle was feeding, the bulls united, and placing themselves in a row, charged the Moors with such fury that they killed them all, and the maidens were set free and restored to their homes.

12. THE LEGEND OF DOM ALBERTO.

When Dom Alberto returned from the hunt, he found his wife very much confused, and said to her,—

“What is the matter, Dona Maria, that you look so confused? Have you betrayed me during my absence?”

“Oh, no, indeed!” said she; “but I have lost the keys of the store-room.”

“Don’t trouble yourself about that, Dona Maria; if the keys were of silver, I will give you others of gold. But tell me whose horse was that I heard neighing in my stable?”

“Oh, that is yours, Dom Albert; my brother sent it to you as a present.”

“And whose sword is that I saw in my cabinet?”

“Yours also, Dom Albert; a gift from my second brother.”

“And whose spurs were those I saw at my bedroom door?”

“Yours also, Dom Albert; a gift from my youngest brother.”

“And what cavalier is that whose form I see in my bed?”

“Kill me, kill me, Dom Albert! I own that I have betrayed you!”

“I shall not kill you, my rose,—I love you far too well for that; but I shall send for your father and give you back to him.”

XIV.

THEODORE, CONTE DE LA VIE LITTÉRAIRE.

BY ALPHONSE DEQUET.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

BY MRS. FRANCES C. HENDERSON.

I.

A TERRIBLE storm overtook the ship on which Theodore had embarked and capsized it. Theodore, who had fortunately left his cabin when the tempest began, soon reappeared on the surface of the water. A Norwegian ship picked him up. A fortnight later Theodore disembarked at Havre. He had gained a friend on the Norwegian ship, but he had lost everything he possessed. When Aristides, his friend, tried to comfort him, he answered, "I had seventeen boxes, each containing eleven hundred and fifty sable furs, which made nineteen thousand eleven hundred and fifty sable-skins, direct from Canada. I could have sold them well in Paris; and now I am a beggar!"

"Not a beggar," said Aristides, "for half of all that I have is yours; it is not much, but it will suffice us until I can gain a position as a literary man."

After the two friends had arrived in Paris with Aristides's trunk, they divided the clothes and dressed in their joint bedroom. As they were going out Aristides addressed Theodore thus:

"My dear friend, I most ardently desire that we may remain as closely united as at present, and, to make our union more lasting, I would advise you to imitate me, and choose letters for your profession."

"I have come from Canada," replied Theodore, "and I have never thought of letters, except in connection with furs."

"What difference does that make?" answered Aristides. "There are men in Canada; and wherever these are there are passions to which we can appeal and the germ of a literature. Man is the same wherever he may live: he differs only in the mode of expression. If you permit me, I will introduce you to Mr. Sulpicius, the bookseller, to whom I have brought letters of introduction."

They locked arms, and crossed the streets, the bridges, and the quays, expecting wonders from Mr. Sulpicius.

Mr. Sulpicius was busy chasing with a feather-duster a multitude of little books, the length of his finger, which had so little consistency that a strong wind, which was then blowing, whirled them around before your eyes so as to make you dizzy, and, finally, lodged them on the book-shelves.

"Those are the Parisian grasshoppers," said Sulpicius. "My fellow-publishers, who have not been as careful as I, have seen their shelves ravaged and their reputations suffer. I think that watchful care may arrest this plague."

Mr. Sulpicius explained the process of reproduction among these grasshoppers, and said that one produced four, four sixteen, sixteen two hundred and fifty-six, and these sixty-five thousand five hundred and thirty-six, and so on, in a frightfully rapid progression.

"I have just come from Canada," said Theodore,—“a country where there are numbers of carnivorous animals, who devastate the poultry-yards. Fortunately, it also abounds in hunters, who follow the murderers to their holes, and drive a very lucrative trade with their skins in different parts of the world.”

Mr. Sulpicius was pleased with this remark and smiled. Aristides thought this was a good time to present the letter of introduction he had brought from Norway. Mr. Sulpicius read it very attentively, folded it carefully, and promised the young men that he would publish their works as soon as they had earned a reputation.

II.

They threaded their way back through the quays, the bridges, and the streets, which they had crossed an instant

before with a firm step and hearts buoyant with hope. This time they looked dejected and irresolute, stopped before the placards announcing horses for sale, and before the shop-windows, elbowed the passers-by, apologized, and made the coachmen swear. Theodore, still more dejected than Aristides, repeated, incessantly, "I see that to make one's self known one must be known already."

They were both so absent-minded that they had walked a long time without noticing a man who followed them, laughing. It would not have been possible to imagine a more benevolent-looking person. He kept his eye on all who passed by him, and seemed to anticipate their slightest wants. For one he called up a hack, to the second he told the time of day. He offered his hand to ladies who wished to cross the road, and picked up the canes of the men. As soon as he was unemployed, he returned to take his place by Theodore, who finally asked him who he was.

"My name is Pamphilius," replied he.

"That means, if I am not mistaken," said Theodore, "one who loves every one."

"And I act up to my name," replied Pamphilius. "My happy mental gifts can be used in the most varied ways. My father did not wish to acknowledge me, so I have disowned him. I am, therefore, independent of all family ties; and I carry my independence into the domain of art. I remember that in my early youth I loved the heroes of romance; but on the occasion of my first illness I gave them up for horny monsters. The next day I went to the museum to worship the gods of Greece. But very soon art was declared to have a mission, and I had to rise with art. Everything had to be placed upon a pinnacle. Woman came out of our hands not only liberated, but ennobled; and the galley-slave kept in the galleys the purity of heart which had not prevented him from purloining the goods of his neighbors. Happy age of paradoxes!—sublime virtues and vice and brutality in wonderful contrast. In all the phases of public opinion, by flattering the predominant taste and following the leaders, I have won a place which is not to be despised. I follow close behind the masters, and look as if I had helped them to plant the flag. Thus it is that by turns idealist, romantic fantast, and realist, not more than a month since, I am now in quest of

some new subject which will put me for the tenth time on the road to glory."

"We are also seeking this road," said Theodore. "Tell us how we must go to work to find it."

"You seem very far from it," replied Pamphilius. "First, you must select some costume; and it is indispensable that it should be in the latest fashion."

"Is that very dear?" asked Theodore.

"They can be had, on the contrary, at a very low price," answered Pamphilius.

For nearly two months Aristides and Theodore worked very assiduously, without allowing themselves the slightest recreation. They had seen Mr. Sulpicius again, and he had made very fair promises in case they should bring him a *chef-d'œuvre*. The two friends presented themselves one morning with great confidence to Mr. Sulpicius, and each one handed him a manuscript. A week later Mr. Sulpicius returned them to them, saying, "Your *chef-d'œuvres* are detestable; but, as you have been warmly recommended to me, I am willing for you to try again."

The next month new manuscripts and a new visit to Mr. Sulpicius, who assured them that their *chef-d'œuvres* were not worth much, and that they must begin again. Two months later they paid a third visit to the publisher.

"Your *chef-d'œuvres* are weak," said Mr. Sulpicius; "but, as you are persevering, I will keep your manuscripts, which I shall never put in print."

III.

"Decidedly," said Theodore, one evening, "Mr. Sulpicius is making fun of us. When we take him a fourth *chef-d'œuvre*, he will promise to use it to make paper boats for his children. Aristides thinks we are progressing: I think we are still a long way off from renown. By dint of reasoning, I have convinced myself that Mr. Sulpicius is, after all, a merchant who must consult the taste of the public; and that if he does not, he does not understand his business, and there must be other men in the trade who have more sense. I shall, therefore, study the public taste, and then write, and I shall certainly find an editor."

The two friends no longer lived together. The day on

which Theodore arrived at this conclusion he rose early and went out.

"I have just come from Canada," said he, "and I scarcely know how to study the tastes of the public. I suppose the safest way is to consult the public and ask him what his tastes are. The public is composed of the persons that one sees every day, that one meets on the street, who go to the eating-houses and to the theatres, who make coats and canes and hats or wear them, and who give to their century its peculiar *cachet* of learning or penetration,—that moral expression resulting from a total of ideas, opinions, and manners, which we mean when we say the seventeenth century, the eighteenth century, the age of Pericles, the age of Augustus. One man does not make the public, neither do two; three is already a little nearer the mark. I shall, therefore, stop a certain number of persons each day and ask them politely what their tastes are."

While Theodore was reasoning thus with himself, he found himself opposite a group of young men, pale, thin, and worn-out, who came out of one of the good restaurants of Paris, and were singing and joking and pretending to be drunk.

"Gentlemen," said he, bowing, "I am Theodore: who are you, who are so elegantly dressed so early in the morning?"

"We are always well dressed," said one of the young men. "We are the youth of France."

"I esteem myself fortunate," said Theodore, "to have met at once the youth of France. Permit me to ask you what is the bent of your literary tastes, and what is your opinion about the literature of this age and those which have preceded it? Please to tell me if your opinions agree with those of the youth of the preceding age; and if they differ, please to tell me why and in what they differ?"

One of the members of the youth of France replied, in the name of all, that they were very tired; that Bambilla had more grace, but Tantina was lighter and more active, but that the two were to dance in the same ballet, and that they should attend the performance without fail, although it was certain that they would still be exceedingly tired when it took place. Then he made a slight courtesy to Theodore, and the rest of the youth of France, courtesying likewise, went off coughing and yawning.

Theodore was then in front of a large Grecian edifice sur-

rounded by columns. "This," thought he, "must be the temple of taste." He accosted a gentleman, who seemed to be composing, and who was rapidly writing down the ideas which heaven sent him. This man directed him to his wife, who, he said, doubtless had time to read.

The wife passed at that moment, so Theodore ran after her and asked what her taste was. The lady informed him that taste was very variable, but that at that time the best was in the Rue Vivienne for hats and on the Boulevards for flounces. She said her husband was much mistaken if he thought she had time to read. She never had time to open a book, as she had to pay or receive twenty-one visits a day, had to take a walk to visit several shops, and show herself at the theatre, and was, in fact, so busy that she had no time to pay any attention to her two children, but had been obliged to give them up entirely to a governess.

Theodore apologized for having stopped a lady who had not time to look after her children, and asked a gentleman who was driving a handsome turnout what he thought of letters. He replied that he had never yet met with a horse of that name.

Theodore was discouraged. He tried to get some information as to their reading from a literary man who would only talk of the great book, from an author who would only talk of his own book, and many other authors and literary men who did not talk at all. Finally he fell in with an individual who was reading a newspaper. At first this man was frightened, but he took courage, and promised to acquaint him with his opinion, as soon as he had found it in an article of Mr. Sacerdot, which he was reading at that moment. Theodore declared that Mr. Sacerdot had no opinion, and that his interlocutor proved that he had an opinion of his own by taking the part of Mr. Sacerdot; but he did not give in, and continued reading.

IV.

Theodore went, one morning, to see Aristides. He was at work, but when his friend entered he threw down his pen and ran to embrace him. After the first transports of joy had subsided, he asked Theodore how he was getting on with his literary labors.

"I have," said Theodore, "something like the plot of a comedy in my head, but I don't know exactly how to end it. The beginning is good: I must find the end later."

"I think," said Aristides, "that you ought to have let your ideas ripen better before you began to write. If you do not know exactly how you are to end, it is probable that you did not know much better how you ought to begin. At any rate, it is necessary to study first at home and out-of-doors, in books and in drawing-rooms,—wherever one may happen to be."

"There is nothing to be learned out-of-doors," replied his friend. "I spent a day in questioning the persons whom I met on the street, and I came home much more uncertain as to what I ought to write than I was when I went out."

"If you are a writer," said Aristides, "you ought not to ask the public what you must do. Act, and the public will either condemn you or absolve you. It is not necessary to question, but to see. I am going out; will you accompany me?"

They went down together.

"Where are we going?" said Theodore.

"Let us take what the day brings," said his friend. "I see a long file of carriages in front of that church; there is to be a wedding. Shall we go in?"

"Willingly," said Theodore.

The sweet melodies played by the organ filled the sacred arches. The nuptial procession advanced to the steps of the high altar, and a curious whispering was heard in the crowd. A very young girl had just knelt on the *prie Dieu*, from which she was to get up a wife. One might have taken her for an angel, if she had not been so elaborately dressed. The richness of her toilet caused the ladies to say, "At the present time one cannot marry without those expensive dresses."

"What grace, what purity!" thought Theodore. "Oh, young virgin! oh, star of the morning! union with you must be the pledge of durable happiness, and the house which gives you shelter shall be purged from all that is dark and maleficient,—just as vitiated air is made wholesome by the presenee of pure gold."

"Sir," said to Aristides a man about forty years of age, who was standing by the bridegroom, "it seems that among

the numerous acquaintances of Mr. — there was no man recommendable by his family,—high-minded, intelligent, and well-informed, and capable of making a wife happy,—since he gives his daughter to a man to whom he would not have bowed on the street three weeks ago. This father said, three weeks ago, ‘I have only one daughter, but she is an heiress.’ In fact, for the last two years, Miss — has been spoken of as a great match, and that reflects a sort of consideration on the father. Mr. — is really not a bad man, but he thinks he shows sense if he simply says, ‘My shares in the Northern Railway.’

“Shall I show you Madame —? She is the one who is so bowed down by grief that her head is hidden by her shoulders. Since she has been seated there she has not moved. Do not ask her later who was at the wedding: she has seen nothing,—she is weeping.

“If you wish to know the names of the guests, the toilets of the ladies, the words spoken around you that no third person is supposed to hear, and all the details of the ceremony—even to the number of the gilt nails on each *fautueil*—you must ask —, the bride. She knows by instinct the number of folds of her bridal-veil behind. When she was ten years old she knew the worth of the trimmings on the underskirts of her little companions. The day the marriage was decided upon she spoke in such a sensible way as to prove that her worldly education had brought forth fruits worthy of the golden age, and that a love-match had no value in her eyes. She gave her opinion on the subject of the marriage contract, and stipulated for several clauses in her favor. In a few years she will say they married her without consulting her heart. To-night she will leave her mother without shedding a tear, and her silly husband will not be frightened by that alarming symptom. He thinks he has made a good bargain. You will see him later at the Exchange. His heart does not, on this his wedding-day, give one pulsation more to the minute than on any other day.”

“Sir,” said Aristides, politely, “I thank you for these details.”

“There is nothing new in them,” replied the same gentleman. “In Paris there are every year at least two thousand marriages between persons who think each other ugly and disagreeable, and who marry *par convenance*.”

They bowed to each other, and the two friends left the church.

As they went out a funeral was coming in. The man could have made but little noise in his lifetime, as so few persons accompanied him. Aristides and Theodore were surprised to see Mr. Sulpicius among the mourners. They both had the same thought, and went to the bookseller to condole with him on the loss of the friend or relation whom he was escorting to his last home. Notwithstanding the abruptness of his manners, Mr. Sulpicius was much touched, and replied,—

“It was neither a relation nor a dear friend. We had some business transactions together, after each of which we had a regular quarrel. But it is our last poet, and I wanted to pay him the last honors”

Theodore was going to say that very few persons were following the last poet to the grave, but Sulpicius was already in church. So he turned to his friend, and said,—

“Please to tell me, Aristides, the name of the poet who is going to be buried?”

“Alas!” replied Aristides, “I am as ignorant as you on this head. But I know by heart the poetry of the greater part of our poets, and as it is probable that the death of this one will recall to the mind of some one present the finest verses he has written, we have only to listen, and I shall be able to satisfy your curiosity.”

Presently they passed by a group of young men. They listened, as they were really talking about the dead poet. They had a thousand funny anecdotes to relate: they spoke about those of his tastes which seemed curious, ridiculous, or vicious; they even recalled to each other the state of his linen and the moles on his face. One made an epigram on the dead poet, and the other a *bon mot* on the disease which had carried him off. And then the group dispersed, and each one ran to his own neighborhood to call attention to the points where the last poet had been open to ridicule.

V.

“But, sirs; genius!” cried Aristides. But he was alone, on the public square.

“Genius,” said a gentleman, who was passing by, “is a

natural gift, by which we can appreciate the merits of causes and effects. It is genius which shows us what are our relations to society, with respect to labor; what is the principle of production and wants, and what the causes of consumption. I am Professor Martin, whom you must know, as you are studious. I am going to expound that thesis at this moment in my lecture. It is fortunate," added he, "that you have fallen in with me, as you would hardly have found places. To the left, and force your way through the crowd. I will put you in the first seats, even if people do complain; but my voice fills the room, and when I am speaking you could hear a pin drop."

Theodore and Aristides followed, though lost in astonishment, as they, Mr. Martin, and one other man composed the crowd. Mr. Martin's harangue lasted an hour, during which he explained how all things depended upon one another; how increase of production lowered the prices; how low prices stimulated consumption; how consumption raised the prices, and how high prices, in their turn, stimulated production. When he had finished he saw his third disciple, who was also his debtor, for Mr. Martin helped with his money all the useful undertakings which were mentioned to him, so as to aid the development of production, which was to produce a more general consumption, and so make comfort more general. As he just then needed to have his advances reimbursed to him, he hinted as much to his borrowing disciple, whose name was Joshua. But Mr. Joshua told him, after offering several very bad excuses, "All things are correlative, Mr. Martin. Go your way, and remember that, if it would give you a great deal of pleasure to receive a sum of money, there is another person who would be very sorry to give it to you."

"Mr. Martin is not up to anything," said Joshua, taking Theodore's arm in the street. "With the money which he lent me, without production and with a very large consumption, I contrive to live very comfortably in Paris."

"I can scarcely believe that," said Theodore.

"There is nothing simpler," said Joshua.

"Are you a merchant?"

"Not at all."

"Owner of a factory, perhaps?"

"You have not guessed aright. But I do not want to have

any secrets from you : I have a capital. If I kept it at home it would not bring me in anything ; on the contrary, if I lend it to a friend who is in need, my capital becomes productive. If I had ten times as much capital, and ten times as many friends needing it, my profits would be ten times as large as they are in one operation. Well, as I have only this amount of capital, this is what I do : I lend to my first friend,—his credit, which was bad, immediately becomes good. I then take back my capital, and lend it to a second friend, and thus on to a third and fourth, etc., and I have soon obliged ten friends and decupled my capital."

"But," objected Theodore, "your friends will lose their credit again when you have taken your capital away from them."

"So much the better," replied Joshua. "I will lend them my capital again, and make better terms."

"And those," said Theodore, "who trusted your friends because they knew you were behind them——"

"Are fools," said Joshua.

"Sir," said Theodore, "who is that person who is treated with such marked respect, and who is always surrounded by admirers?"

"That," said Joshua, "is a man who did not believe that a Tartar had rode one hundred and twenty leagues to bring good news from the war."

"And this other, whom one scarcely deigns to notice?"

"That is the man who believed that the Tartar had rode one hundred and twenty leagues."

"Then it is disgraceful to believe that one has been victorious, and honorable not to believe it," said Theodore.

"It is disgraceful to lose," said Joshua.

Theodore was just going to ask Joshua if the building before them was not the Temple of Taste, as he had supposed, but Joshua was already ascending the steps which led to it. While he was going up the steps the man who had had the decency to gain was coming down.

"I keep the world in motion," said he, addressing Theodore and Aristides. "To-day I have been putting excellent mines in circulation."

"Copper mines?" asked Theodore.

"I do not know," said the financier. "They will pay

forty-five francs the first year and one hundred the second. I have also helped to raise the shares of the Circuit Canal, which were nearly worthless."

"Is that the canal," said Aristides, "which is to unite the large towns in the centre?"

"I do not know," said the financier. "They gained thirty francs this morning, and to-morrow I shall sell. Lastly, I have gone into the Jacquart steamboats."

"Which will go to New York?" asked Theodore.

"I do not know," said the financier. "And you, sirs,—have you taken any?"

"We are writers," said Aristides.

"I am very fond of artists," said the financier. "If I were in your place I would describe a financier: but a real financier, such as I am; one who devotes himself to industry, the queen of the day; who makes a fortune, arrives at high positions, and enjoys the favor of the public as I do, and expresses himself——"

"As you do?" said Theodore.

"Yes, as I do," said the financier.

VI.

Theodore had been told that the theatre was the winning-post, and that all talents came there to seek the consecration of the superiority which they had displayed elsewhere, so he thought it might be as well to start from the winning-post; and that, without having been a man of business, or painted battles, or preached peace to the nations, it might be possible to be born with a vocation for the theatre. He had, therefore, finished the comedy of which he had spoken one day to Aristides, and he had offered it to a theatre, which refused it, as a matter of course. Theodore said to himself, as he carried it home, "I wonder who read it between the porter who received it and the porter who returned it?"

The happy Pamphilius, whom he met at that moment, spoke the language of reason to him.

"You should do as I do," said he. "I do with the theatre as I do with everything else. If I find that a piece has succeeded, I write one like it, and that two, three, four, ten times, even, till the public is weary. I am now working up dangerous *liaisons*, which furnished me materials for two pieces,

—one where I condemn them, and one where I make them prosperous.”

“Which one is the most moral?” asked Theodore.

“Always the last,” said Pamphilius.

“And why?”

“Because in that one I prove that the other one was not. It is impossible to know how far the indulgence of the public will reach: one must have tried it to understand it perfectly. As to the subject which I am treating now, I have an infallible touchstone for the interest it excites. Thus fifteen or twenty times a year in Paris a certain set of furniture is sold, which the public goes to see, to admire, and to pay for much higher than they would the same articles new. Why? Because said furniture is said to have belonged to some actress, whose real talent consisted in receiving some presents to sell them afterwards. And who is it who runs to such exhibitions? You may be sure that there are very few *figurantes*; these know the costly and famous furniture by heart,—they have received it and sold it in their turn. No; it is especially respectable women who go there; their husbands take them there, and their children accompany them. They come because they are curious,—curious of vice, curious of the carpets on which it walked, of the cushions on which it sat, of the mirrors in which it looked; they almost regret that the mirrors have not retained some trace of it. But they indemnify themselves by going to the theatre to see a representation of that which interests them. The honest women, and those who are not, seem to have made an agreement to dress, to amuse themselves, and to spend money without thinking or feeling. One listens, one notices: the only question is, Who shall pay the first visit?”

“You are right,” said Theodore. “I will study morality among those who have none. I will write either a novel or a play. I shall be played or read. Must I write an apology, or a satire? Ah, I see now how I shall achieve renown!”

“You are not quite right,” said Pamphilius; “you must also collaborate.”

“How so?”

“In making *bon mots* which another will put in the piece, or in making a piece where another will place the *bon mots*.”

“And what is a *bon mot*?” asked Theodore.

"Wit makes itself small to pass," replied Pamphilius. "There must not be too many *mots*, because they would injure each other; besides which, they can be used in another piece. There must, however, be enough,—five or six is a very pretty number. They must be spoken quickly and generally in reply, and one need not shrink from stopping a scene to bring them in happily. It is well for them to be plain enough to be understood by everybody, so that they can be repeated the next day in town and printed in the papers. The theatre requires a vast experience, as you may see."

"It is almost an art," said Theodore.

Pamphilius proposed to Theodore to introduce him in a house where he had business to transact. "The master is a man celebrated for his skill," said he. "If you wish to carve, I engage you to imitate his style."

The man who received them ran to place himself before his desk after he had opened for them, begging them to excuse him. He said he was finishing a critical review, with sharp angles, of a work of Aristides.

"Aristides!" cried Theodore. "He is my friend. How do you like his book?"

"Read, sir," said the critic, "for I have finished. This article will tell. Besides three new *mots*, I have dovetailed in it four other words twisted from their original meaning. You see how I treat your friend."

"But the idea?" asked Theodore, after having read.

"Let us leave the idea alone," said the other. "Is not that a labor?"

"It is very much like your preceding article on Baptiste."

"You are very much mistaken; this article is perfectly new."

"I think I read it on Sunday," said Theodore.

The skilful carver answered with some sharpness, and Pamphilius carried off Theodore. Going down the steps he made him observe that he should have been full of admiration for four words twisted from their true sense, and that it was not exactly the thing to tell a writer that his articles had already been in print. Theodore acknowledged that he was wrong, and promised to be more careful in future.

VII.

A few days later Pamphilius introduced Theodore in the office of a newspaper where all shades of opinion were endured. He told him that if he could make fun agreeably of every one who had become celebrated through his prose or his verse by his labors or his natural talent, he was free to develop his literary tastes under the superintendence of two or three editors.

A number of persons were there, and some one mentioned Aristides.

"He is my friend," said Theodore.

Immediately he was overwhelmed by questions. Theodore, who was proud of having a friend who seemed to be so celebrated, related all the details of the life of Aristides from the day when he had first made his acquaintance on the Norwegian vessel. When he began to speak of his literary works he was immediately brought back to private life, which convinced him that it was real interest which dictated the questions, and not merely curiosity.

The next day Theodore went to see Aristides, in order to tell him that the editors of a certain literary periodical admired him very much and were very anxious to make his acquaintance.

"My friends, as you are pleased to call them," said Aristides, "seem to know me perfectly already. Read this!" and he handed him a still damp number of the periodical sent him that morning.

Theodore read it, and was surprised to recognize the anecdotes which he had related on the previous evening. He could not repress an exclamation of surprise, and acknowledged to Aristides that he had some share in forming the halo of glory which was about to encircle his head.

Aristides replied that, taking all things into consideration, he was rather sorry than pleased. "Personal preoccupations are most injurious to literary labors. I see in all that I have read only useless details about my person, my tastes, and my habits, and I would gladly give the praises which accompany them, and which have no foundation, for a good and fair *critique*. All these biographical details—which suit one about as well as another—only stimulate a morbid curiosity,

and the public, charmed by the daily representation of impotence side by side with talent, ends by regarding all with perfect indifference, and at last knows no longer which is ridiculous, the king or his fool. So, my dear Theodore, I beg you to go and speak to my friends: thank them for their good intention, but ask them not to relate any more anecdotes concerning me, as, if my works belong to the public, my person is my own."

Theodore promised compliance and went out. He went to the office of the periodical, where the editors laughed heartily at Aristides's pretensions.

The next number of the periodical did not say anything in praise of Aristides. On the contrary, it said, in an article devoted to this young author, that all the good ideas in his books were furnished by his friends, but that all the bad ideas were his own. Finally it drew a parallel between Theodore and Aristides, where the former was crowned with flowers and all the honors of victory.

"What will Aristides say?" was Theodore's first thought. He arrived quite out of breath at the office of the paper, sat down at the green table, and asked how it was possible that they should treat his friend so badly to-day, after having paid him so many compliments yesterday. They replied that the compliments came from one person and the "punishment" from another, and that nothing prevented him from praising his friend in the next number, but that they could not promise that nobody should abuse him in the succeeding one.

Theodore, who was very anxious to prove his innocence in this matter, went to see Aristides. He found him in a state of high irritation. "I am dishonored!" cried he continually.

Theodore tried to prove to him that he attached too much importance to those scurrilous attacks, to which no one would listen.

"How is it possible to work under such annoyance?" said Aristides, sinking on a chair.

"Rest assured that I am not to blame for this," said Theodore.

"You are all answerable," said Aristides, "as you write for the same paper."

"Each one of us expresses only his own opinion," was Theodore's reply.

He returned to the office of the periodical, where he was politely informed that, as he had more scruples than talent, his services were no longer needed.

When he found himself alone on the street, Theodore indulged in very bitter reflections. "I have suffered shipwreck," said he, "and have been forced to share the wardrobe of a generous man. I have been shown out of the door by a publisher to whom I offered three *chef-d'œuvres*. I asked the public to tell me his taste, which he could not do, and I have studied his manners without being able to make any use of my observations. I have seen, tried, and left everything. I have betrayed my best friend, and have no career!"

He happened to be just then before the little hotel where he had lodged with Aristides on their arrival in Paris, and he contemplated the two windows of the room which had seemed so favorable to study and to be a hot-bed for celebrity.

"Mr. Theodore!" exclaimed the porter, who recognized him. "I have had a letter here for you for more than a year, but as you had not left me your address I could not deliver it. Come in, and I will hand it to you."

Theodore went in: the porter looked, but found nothing; looked again, and put his hand upon a large envelope showing the stamp of the marine commissariat in Nantes. Theodore opened it and read. This letter announced to him that seventeen boxes had been picked up on the coast between Le Croisie and Saint Nazaire,—that these boxes contained Canadian furs, eleven hundred and fifty skins in each box; on all of these boxes, in spite of their having remained a long time in the water, Theodore's name was perfectly legible, and he was invited to come and claim them at the custom-house, where they had been deposited.

Theodore's heart was filled with delight. He rewarded the faithful porter, blessed the custom-house, and ran to see Aristides, who forgave him and congratulated him. He sold his furs very well, as they were then very fashionable, and embracing Aristides, embarked for Canada. He arrived without suffering shipwreck a second time, and never gave an after-thought to literature.

XV.

AMANDA.

A FARCE IN ONE ACT.

BY NICOLAS MILAN.

TRANSLATED FROM THE CROATIAN

BY MRS. FRANCES C. HENDERSON.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

MILIVOJ.

MILKA, *his wife.*

ANDRIJA.

TINKA, *his wife.*

AGENT of an insurance company.

KATICA, *chambermaid.*

The SCENE is laid in MILIVOJ's house.

The room is arranged tastefully; in the middle is a door, and doors also to the right and left; to the right a window. On the right side are a table and a chair; on the left are a sofa, an arm-chair, and a table, and close by the door, on either side, an arm-chair.

FIRST SCENE.

MILKA, *alone.*

MILKA. [*Is seated near the window, leaning back and looking carelessly into the street.*] I would really like to know if my Milivoj is carrying on a flirtation with any one. [*Meditatively.*] It is already sixteen days, and [*she looks at the clock*] in five minutes he will have been gone one hour

over the proper time. I am sure eleven o'clock is late enough for any one to stay out. At eleven I always begin to doubt if my Milivoj really loves me. [*She hears her husband's voice outside.*] There he is, talking angrily to some one at the end of the street. Of course, I feel uneasy; I love my Milivoj. It is true he is noisy, even when he is happy. When we came down from the altar he seized my hand and looked at me so,—he never looks at any one else so. And then, when he kisses me he looks as devout as if he were worshipping in church. [*She leans out and looks anxiously down the street.*] But what has become of my friend? Gone! but whither? For a little walk? See how sorrowfully Anice is looking after him! Of course, she only wanted to give her master the paper. [*She bows and points to her head-dress.*] If I had on my hat I would run after him. Good heavens, if he were going to fight a duel with any one! I am young and affectionate, but I do not mean to be as much in love with my husband as my friend Tinka is with hers. She is wrong, for Andrija is not a true and worthy man like my Milivoj. When *he* says anything he means it. I often say to her, "Tinka, you are wrong,—you are his wife."

SECOND SCENE.

TINKA and MILKA.

TINKA. [*Comes in hurriedly through the door repeating the sentence, "Tinka, you have no time." Continuing.*] The deceiver! he avoids me.

MILKA. Tell me what is the matter? I know nothing.

TINKA. So you know nothing? I must tell you; yes, yes!

MILKA. Fie, Tinka, to talk so of your husband!

TINKA. [*Giving her her hand.*] Ah, my friend, you know I have no husband. He avoids me. My husband deceives me! [*She cries.*] Ah, ah! I am the most miserable woman in the whole world! [*She cries and sobs.*]

MILKA. [*Bending over her.*] But do tell me what has happened.

TINKA. [*Continuing to weep.*] Just think! my Andrija——

MILKA. Your Andrija——

TINKA. Has money!

MILKA. That is no crime. My Milivoj also has money.

TINKA. But he hoards it!

MILKA. That is not wrong either; he does well to take care of it.

TINKA. But he hides it!

MILKA. Hides it? where?

TINKA. In his hat! in his hat!

MILKA. [*Merrily.*] In his hat?

TINKA. Yes, in his hat.

MILKA. Then he must either have a very small fortune or [*smiling*] a very large hat.

TINKA. It is not kind of you to make fun of me! You smiled; that is not friendly. [*Weeping bitterly.*] You would laugh over our ruin! oh, oh!

MILKA. Tinka, I wish you would be in earnest and talk sensibly.

TINKA. Well, then, listen. [*She makes a great effort to restrain her tears.*] My Andrija has a new hat——

MILKA. Milivoj also.

TINKA. A little hollow——

MILKA. To make the lining firmer.

TINKA. Yes, to make the lining firmer. Oh, that lining, that lining!

MILKA. And what do you care about the lining of my husband's hat?

TINKA. And what are you talking about your husband's hat for? Much I care about your husband! I do not know if your husband is also in the habit of hiding money under the lining of his hat.

MILKA. I have already begged you once, and beg you now again for the last time, to speak plainly, so that I can understand you. I am getting uneasy about your health.

TINKA. Milka, my dear Milka, please bear with me patiently to the end.

MILKA. [*Leads her to the sofa, and they both sit down.*] Well, then, tell me all.

TINKA. You know that a husband ought never to have any secrets from his wife. You know that mine always has a hundred requirements to make of me, because I have property and am a good manager.

MILKA. And who tells you that?

TINKA. My mother,—and that because she is such a sensible woman. Since my Andrija requires so much of me, he ought to render an account of his own expenses. He spends a great deal. Every day at the office, at all hours, he drinks Pilsener beer, eleven kreutzers a glass, and after dinner he gives twelve kreutzers for a cup of coffee, although we buy it by the hundredweight.

MILKA. I have never inquired if Milivoj pays twelve or fourteen kreutzers for a cup of coffee. A wife has nothing to do with such matters.

TINKA. We ought exactly to look after those very things. It is easy to see that you are very inexperienced,—which is very excusable, as you have only been married fourteen days. Wait till you have been married half a year, and then tell me if such extravagance does not vex you.

MILKA. Getting vexed never does any good.

TINKA. Yes, it does! How else could I have found out that my husband hides money in his hat?

MILKA. There is that unfortunate hat again!

TINKA. That unfortunate hat—— Yesterday he bought it, brought it home, tried it on, and asked me if it was becoming to him. I said it was, and made him look at himself in the glass. He then sent the servant to the office for a letter: Andrija went himself to see a friend. I took up the hat, and was looking at it carelessly and feeling it with my finger, when I heard the rustling of fine paper under the lining. It moved when I pushed it, and examining more carefully I made a discovery. There were three five-gulden notes and a one-gulden note,—in all sixteen gulden. I put them back again exactly as I had found them, folded up together. He denies that. When he came back he glanced at his hat, and said instantly, “What have you been doing to my hat?”

MILKA. And you?

TINKA. I? Nothing. I took the hat into his room and put it on the table; then I wrote a letter to my mother, relating the occurrence, and asking for her advice.

MILKA. You did wrong. It is quite possible that the hat-maker had put the money in the hat for some particular purpose, and forgotten it; but in that case his property should be returned to him.

TINKA. Oh, no! I did exactly what I should have done, and that is what my mother said in her answer to my letter. She fully approved of my having put the money back in the hat, and advised me to look in the hat every day to see whether it increases or decreases, and thus I can find out if my husband is guilty or not.

MILKA. And did you find out?

TINKA. Can you ask, already, on the next day?

MILKA. Did his money-plant grow?

TINKA. On the contrary, my dear, on the contrary. The sixteen florins melted away to twelve. Now, my dear Milka, is not that a positive proof that he does not love me?

MILKA. Yes; it looks dark. Fortunately, my Milivoj has no office.

TINKA. You may feel that you have a treasure. But have you looked under the lining of his hat? and have you counted all his dear friends?

MILKA. Tinka, I must really forbid all such insinuations!

TINKA. [*Looking out of the window.*] Here are the two birds.

MILKA. Take care,—that is my Milivoj.

TINKA. And the other one? I see another hat.

MILKA. The owner of the other hat—is the agent of an insurance company.

TINKA. Does he visit you?

MILKA. Since yesterday he has been about here several times.

TINKA. I will slip away. I am too much excited to see strangers.

MILKA. As you please, my friend. [*They go out on the left.*]

THIRD SCENE.

MILIVOJ and the AGENT; afterwards KATICA.

Both have on hats exactly alike. MILIVOJ puts his down on the chair on the right side of the door, the AGENT is standing on the left side, and holds his hat in his hands.

MILIVOJ. Please to come in. [*To himself.*] It is not possible that my wife should have gone out. [*To the AGENT.*] Please to take a seat. Excuse me. [*He opens the door.*] Katica! Is not my wife at home?

KATICA. [*Stands in the doorway.*] My gracious lady? If she is not here she must be in her room with her friend.

MILIVOJ. Good! good! [*He shuts the door.*] Then we can talk quietly over the matter.

AGENT. As I have said,—a sum of twenty thousand florins——

MILIVOJ. Yes, I know; but I must beg you to keep it a profound secret. Neither my wife nor any one whatsoever must hear a word about this transaction.

AGENT. You can rely upon me. I am as silent as the grave.

MILIVOJ. But every one is occasionally indiscreet.

AGENT. My dear sir——

MILIVOJ. You must be particularly careful not to let anything slip before an intimate friend my wife has here.

AGENT. I have business calling me home just now. If you will allow me I will return in half an hour, and wait for you somewhere in the neighborhood.

MILIVOJ. Please rather to take the trouble to come back here for me.

AGENT. With pleasure. Farewell. [*He goes.*]

MILIVOJ. Farewell. The other project we can talk over with my wife later.

AGENT. [*Lays his hat on the chair to the left of the door, takes a letter out of his pocket, and steps back a little.*] Take this little book [*gives him a pamphlet*] and look over the figures here in this chapter. [*He shows him the place.*]

MILIVOJ. Do not trouble yourself; I can find it.

AGENT. Good! Then I will just step home for half an hour. [*He picks up MILIVOJ's hat from the chair on the right of the door instead of his own, and departs.*]

MILIVOJ. [*Puts the pamphlet down on the table.*] To think of my being so polite to the agent of an insurance company!

FOURTH SCENE.

ANDRIJA and MILIVOJ.

ANDRIJA. *Servus*, Milivoj, are you alone?

MILIVOJ. I am alone; but your wife is with Milka in her room.

ANDRIJA. Then we have plenty of time. [*He puts his*

hat on the chair to the left of the door.] So, is the honeymoon over already?

MILIVOJ. I have business with a certain man. Have you paid your wager yet? [*He laughs.*]

ANDRIJA. Don't talk so loud. You know my wife is not far off. Yesterday I was really plucked. I lost four florins besides the beer of the wager. I shall have to pinch myself for six months to pay that. I must drown myself if I have another such vein of ill luck.

MILIVOJ. Yes; and your little capital is wasting away in such follies.

ANDRIJA. [*Jumps up and takes the wrong hat, leaving his own.*] It is melting away, my friend. It worries me. I no longer feel as happy, even when I am with my wife. I know she would be dreadfully angry if she suspected that I play.

MILIVOJ. Why do you not resolve to give up cards entirely?

ANDRIJA. Tinka would certainly wish me to do it.

MILIVOJ. Don't mind Tinka; she holds you under the slipper fast enough. What do I care about Tinka?

ANDRIJA. To be sure she is here. Then I will run away. [*He jumps up from his chair.*]

MILIVOJ. Have you quarrelled?

ANDRIJA. Oh, no; but she has hidden the key of her treasury. [*He puts on the hat he was holding in his hand, and leaves.*] Adieu.

FIFTH SCENE.

MILIVOJ; afterwards MILKA and TINKA.

MILIVOJ. I pity you, my poor Andrija; you are a good fellow, but dreadfully under the slipper. If—— [*The door on the right opens, and TINKA and MILKA come in.*] I kiss your hand. [*To TINKA.*] [*To MILKA.*] Good-morning, Milka.

MILKA. [*Still standing by TINKA, says very coolly.*] Good-morning, my dear Milivoj.

TINKA. Good-morning, Mr. Malic.

MILIVOJ. How is this that Milka greets me so coolly? She does not come to meet me,—she does not kiss me as usual. [*He is standing by the table, so that the ladies do not see the hat on the chair near it.*]

MILKA. [*To TINKA.*] Can I?

TINKA. Look around if you see his hat anywhere.

MILKA. [*Looks around coolly and mechanically.*] My dear Milivoj, good-morning.

MILIVOJ. And my kiss! [*He presses her to his heart.*

MILKA *glances hastily at TINKA, and seeing that she is not looking, she looks lovingly at MILIVOJ and kisses him tenderly.*]

TINKA. [*Says without looking at MILKA.*] That is the way to treat these men. [*She hears them kiss.*] Oh, fie!

MILKA. [*To TINKA.*] I cannot do otherwise.

MILIVOJ. And that is right. But do tell me what has put you out of humor?

TINKA. Milka does not feel very well. [*To MILKA.*] See what you find in the hat. I think something is hidden in it.

MILKA. Yes, Milivoj; I really feel badly. [*Looking around, says to TINKA.*] Is something really hidden?

MILIVOJ. Really—— [*Pulls out his memorandum-book and writes down the date.*]

TINKA. But where can it be?

MILKA. Where?

MILIVOJ. I have an invitation for this evening.

MILKA. And where, then, is your hat, Milivoj?

MILIVOJ. My hat? [*He looks everywhere, and at last discovers it on the chair behind him; MILKA sees it at the same time.*]

MILKA. There!

MILIVOJ. Yes, there it is. And why do you ask?

MILKA. Oh, just because.

TINKA. Did you see it?

MILKA. What?

TINKA. That I was right?

MILKA. I have not seen anything.

TINKA. Oh, you poor, blind creature!

MILIVOJ. I have told you that I have an invitation for this evening.

TINKA. [*Seated by the table, to MILKA.*] Just look here.

MILIVOJ. Had you not heard of the party?

TINKA. Mr. Malic, have you a purple lining in your new hat?

MILIVOJ. [*Aside.*] How naïve! [*Aloud.*] I believe so.

TINKA. Is that your only answer,—muttering in your beard “I believe so”? .

MILKA. I do not see that anything more was needed.

TINKA. Nothing more needed! Do you not see that his avarice stands out as clear as the sun? I was already sure that two friends would have the same habits, and I now see that your husband is, like mine, in the habit of concealing his property in his hat.

MILKA. Tinka, I forbid you to speak of my Milivoj in that way.

TINKA. You unworthy creature! you would really fall down at your tyrant's feet!

MILKA. What tyrant?

TINKA. Can you ask? Why, your Milivoj and my Andrija.

MILIVOJ. When there are quarrels it is always the wife who is to blame.

TINKA. I suppose you would like roast goose every day.

MILKA. [*Claps her hands.*] Roast goose! that is what I like.

MILIVOJ. [*Aside.*] Roast goose; so! [*Aloud.*] Madam I am really tired of such arguments. I am willing to be that you would quarrel even in heaven.

TINKA. I do not think any tyranny will be allowed in heaven: not even under a lining,—even under a purple lining.

MILIVOJ. [*With quiet irony.*] I suppose you would no mind it under some other lining.

TINKA. [*Looks sorrowfully at MILKA.*] You see, my dear I was right.

MILIVOJ. Please to let Milka alone; she is good and happy.

TINKA. It is no thanks to you if she is good and happy.

MILIVOJ. Did you look in the newspaper to assure yourself?

TINKA. Of what?

MILIVOJ. Of what is under that lining?

TINKA. I did not look in the paper, but I know where else to look. Adieu, Milka; adieu, Mr. Malic. [*She goes.*]

SIXTH SCENE.

MILIVOJ *and* MILKA.MILIVOJ. [*Looking after TINKA.*] Milka!

MILKA. Milivoj!

MILIVOJ. What is the matter with that lady?

MILKA. Nothing,—nothing at all.

MILIVOJ. Nothing! You know that is not true. It is not nice in my Milka to have secrets from her husband; say with your hand on your heart if it is right.

MILKA. Milivoj——

MILIVOJ. Well?

MILKA. I would tell you, if I dared.

MILIVOJ. Dared? how so?

MILKA. [*Confidentially.*] Tinka is very inquisitive——

MILIVOJ. I perceive that myself. But what is she after now?

MILKA. I dare not tell you. Tinka made me promise not to tell you; and you would not want your Milka to break her promise?

MILIVOJ. You had better refrain from making promises if it is going to make you keep secrets from me. It is very wrong for a wife to have secrets from her husband.

MILKA. And not for the husband to have secrets from his wife, eh?

MILIVOJ. Of course, he ought not to have any.

MILKA. And yet you have secrets which you do not wish me to know.

MILIVOJ. No, I have not.

MILKA. You have not?

MILIVOJ. I——

MILKA. I believe you, I believe you! and yet I would be so glad if you would swear it.

MILIVOJ. You little witch! I am beginning to fear that you know how to deceive one.

MILKA. It is much easier for a man to deceive one.

MILIVOJ. Indeed? I am curious to know how.

MILKA. Are you joking?

MILIVOJ. I must really beg you to tell me what you are driving at.

MILKA. [*Quickly to herself.*] If I require of him—— then my suspicions would be lulled, and I might be as happy as before. [*To MILIVOJ.*] But you must not get angry.

MILIVOJ. I get angry,—with you?

MILKA. Good! [*She speaks with a pathetic voice, and looks right into his eyes.*] Now, look me straight in the eyes,—so.

MILIVOJ. [*Does what she wishes, but cannot keep from smiling.*] Is that right?

MILKA. Yes. [*To herself.*] Now, if this arrow does not hit the mark, my mind will be easy. [*Aloud.*] Now give me——

MILIVOJ. [*Holding out his hand.*] My hand?

MILKA. No; your new hat.

MILIVOJ. [*Laughs aloud.*] My new hat?

MILKA. [*Aside.*] He laughs. [*Aloud.*] Yes, your new hat.

MILIVOJ. Here, my love. [*He gives her his hat.*]

MILKA. You give it to me? [*Joyfully.*] And may I do what I please with it?

MILIVOJ. [*Decidedly.*] Yes, what you please.

MILKA. May I rip out the lining?

MILIVOJ. Yes; if you put in another.

MILKA. [*Surprised.*] If I put in another? [*She looks up.*] Really! [*She puts the hat down joyfully on the chair to the right.*] Milivoj, you are my good, dear, only Milivoj! [*She kisses him and leaves the room.*]

SEVENTH SCENE.

MILIVOJ, *alone.*

MILIVOJ. You dear little witch! How she blushes! I really do not believe there is another such a lovely and beautiful wife in the whole country. [*He looks at his watch.*] What a nuisance to have to meet that agent again!

EIGHTH SCENE.

MILIVOJ and ANDRIJA.

The door is suddenly opened, and ANDRIJA comes in in a state of great excitement.

MILIVOJ. Oh, Andrija! what is the matter with you?

ANDRIJA. I have lost all my property.

MILIVOJ. So, then, you were rich ?

ANDRIJA. Don't ask such silly questions. Oh, Milivoj ! I should not have expected it of you ! Remember that we have been friends since our earliest childhood. It is a shame that you should have betrayed me !

MILIVOJ. *I!* betray you ? and to whom ?

ANDRIJA. Yes, you ! Who else could have told my wife that I keep money under the lining of my hat for my game of *taroc* ?

MILIVOJ. Heaven is my witness that I never said a word about it.

ANDRIJA. I am willing to believe that you did not tell her directly, but you told your wife, and of course she told her friend.

MILIVOJ. [*Standing on the right side of the table.*] I assure you——

ANDRIJA. [*Standing on the left side of the table.*] As for me——

NINTH SCENE.

MILIVOJ, ANDRIJA, and TINKA.

TINKA. [*Bursts in very much excited, and says, angrily.*] Is your wife at home, Mr. Malic ?

MILIVOJ. She is ; but what is the matter with you, madam, you are so excited ?

TINKA. Oh, I am as quiet as a lamb ; but [*angrily to ANDRIJA*] I shall not rest till I have learned something about your friend Amanda. [*She goes out, slamming the door.*]

TENTH SCENE.

ANDRIJA and MILIVOJ.

ANDRIJA. [*Quite bewildered.*] Amanda ?

MILIVOJ. So you have a friend Amanda ? For shame, Andrija !

ANDRIJA. Milivoj, do not drive me to despair.

MILIVOJ. That is a great deal worse than hiding money in your hat. It is very bad in you to be having a love-affair when you have only been married six months. You are old enough to be steady. Oh, fie !

ANDRIJA. [*Angrily.*] Will you stop, or shall I show you what I can do when I am really angry?

MILIVOJ. Oho! Quiet, my friend! If you have done no wrong, why is your wife jealous about this Amanda?

ANDRIJA. Will you stop speaking about that wicked Amanda? I do not know any Amanda; and I do not know how my wife hit upon that name. All I know is that when I got home the fox was in my hen-house; that is, my wife was examining my hat, and had her finger under the lining. She took out the treasure——

MILIVOJ. Treasure?

ANDRIJA. Yes; for me it was really a treasure that I had there in my hat; and now she has locked it up in her room!

MILIVOJ. Most curious!

ANDRIJA. I am sure that my mother-in-law is at the bottom of it all. She has invented some story about some Amanda; but it exists only in her imagination. There is not a word of truth——

ELEVENTH SCENE.

The same, MILKA, and TINKA.

MILKA comes forward very solemnly, behind her is the weeping TINKA. MILKA goes straight up to the astonished ANDRIJA. TINKA goes to the middle door and sits down on a chair. She weeps silently while MILKA is speaking.

MILKA. Mr. Vajkon, it is not right in you to deceive my friend in this manner, and to destroy the happiness of her whole life. My dear Tinka has not deserved this. She loved you,—loved do I say? She worshipped you. Her unfortunate inquisitiveness has shown her that you are carrying on a love-affair, and injuring her honor. I must say I could not have believed it of you. I——

ANDRIJA. [*Meekly.*] My dear madam——

MILIVOJ. But, Milka!

MILKA. [*To MILIVOJ.*] Tell me candidly, do you know anything about any Amanda?

MILIVOJ. Upon my honor I do not!

TINKA. [*Crying.*] I do not believe him, my dear Milka.

MILIVOJ. But do tell us: who is this Amanda? Have

you any proofs, or have you only surmises without any foundation?

MILKA. [*Confidentially.*] Only think, dear Milivoj, my unhappy friend found a letter from his beloved signed "Your faithful Amanda." It came from Triest.

MILIVOJ. Andrija, how is it possible?

MILKA. I will not ask if you think you are acting fairly towards them both. [*She pushes MILIVOJ towards ANDRIJA, so that she comes on the right side and he in the middle.*]

MILIVOJ. [*Coughs and hesitates a little.*] Andrija!

ANDRIJA. [*Furious.*] Don't say a word or I will kill you!

MILKA. Milivoj, don't be afraid of him; but tell him plainly what you think of him.

MILIVOJ. Yes, yes; that is what I mean to do.

MILKA. Wait! Better still, you need not speak at all. [*She points to the chair to the right.*] Is that his hat or yours?

MILIVOJ. [*Seeing that ANDRIJA has his hat in his hand.*] That must be mine, as he has his in his hand.

MILKA. [*Takes the hat and turns up the lining.*] Now, see? the proof was hidden under the lining of his hat. Here—— [*Finding money hid, she looks up in great surprise.*] Milivoj, what is this? Here is money in your hat.

TINKA. [*Quickly.*] You see it is as I told you,—the men are all alike.

MILKA. Air! air! I am stifling. [*She leans back in her chair.*] Oh, my God!

MILIVOJ. Milka, my dear Milka! do compose yourself and listen to me!

MILKA. I do not want to hear anything! I have no faith in anybody! I am the most unhappy woman in the whole world!

MILIVOJ. But—thunder and hell!—is that my hat?

MILKA. [*Starts.*] Then whose is it?

MILIVOJ. I never hide money in my hat; but Andrija does. So we must have changed hats, and that one must be my hat and this one his.

MILKA. [*Sadly.*] Then Amanda was in your hat?

TINKA. [*Joyfully to ANDRIJA.*] Then that letter did not belong to you?

ANDRIJA. Of course not.

MILIVOJ. But—a thousand thunders!—who is Amanda? Show her to me at once, or I shall fly in a passion.

ANDRIJA. [*To MILIVOJ.*] For shame! so it was you, and you were trying to pass it off on me!

MILIVOJ. Where is the insane asylum? for I shall certainly lose my senses. Who can deliver me from that unfortunate Amanda?

TWELFTH SCENE.

The same, the AGENT, and KATICA.

KATICA. [*Announces.*] The agent of the insurance company.

MILIVOJ. Let him go to the devil!

AGENT. [*Standing by the door.*] I have come for you, as you asked me to do. As I see on your table a hat exactly like mine, allow me to ask if we could not possibly have exchanged hats?

MILIVOJ. [*Joyfully.*] Now I see how it is! Have you a lady-love whose name is Amanda?

AGENT. I do not know any lady of that name.

MILIVOJ. You do not know any one? Please to think a little.

AGENT. If you please, I came to get you.

MILIVOJ. Have you never received a letter from a certain Amanda?

AGENT. Amanda? wait! I believe that is the name signed to a copy of a letter which one of my friends sent me, from some lady who wants to know something about insurance.

ALL. And where was that letter?

AGENT. Why, I suppose I put it where I always put any papers which I do not wish to lose,—that is, under the lining of my hat.

MILIVOJ. Mr. Agent, I would like to embrace you.

ANDRIJA. And I also.

AGENT. [*Embarrassed.*] Oh, pray—— I have come for you; but please to give me my own hat.

MILKA. [*Coaxingly to MILIVOJ.*] Give Andrija the money.

TINKA. [*Lovingly to ANDRIJA.*] Give the agent the letter.

ANDRIJA. And you promise never to be so inquisitive again?

TINKA. Never!—if you tell me what is your reason for hiding money in your hat.

ANDRIJA. For my game of *taroc*.

MILIVOJ. His losses are written down as cups of coffee.

TINKA. It is not necessary to secrete money in your hat for a game of *taroc*. From to-day on I will give you what you need for it.

ANDRIJA. You adorable creature!

MILKA. [*To MILIVOJ.*] And you are a pearl of a man!

AGENT. If you please, I came to fetch you.

MILIVOJ. No, no; you must stay here and drink a glass of wine in honor of your having restored harmony and peace to us all. You——

TINKA. You, an agent for insuring lives!

MILKA. [*Smiling.*] You, who carry Amanda in your hat!

AGENT. If you please, sir, I have come to fetch you.

XVI.

THE STORM-BRIDE.

BY DR. E. C. RASK.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH

BY MRS. FRANCES C. HENDERSON.

HE who, on the 17th of April, A.D. 1823, has stood behind the new windmill near Lagjewnike, in the Brombergske district, can, if he escaped with his life, relate to us the following story :

Lise, a poor orphan girl, and the parson's sixteen-year-old nursery girl,—who had been carefully educated in his house and who had a right pretty face,—wished on that day, as on every other since the beginning of spring, to go along the pleasant foot-path in front of the mill to her master's piece of ground. The young miller Louis, the miller's sprightly son, poked his head out through the hole in the mill and cried, jestingly, "Ah, Lise ; pretty Lise !"

Half angrily, half pleasantly, she stood still, and said, "And what is now the matter again ?"

"Just what I told you yesterday, pretty Lise. Have you no desire to marry ?"

"Handsome Louis ! If you only wish to tease me, let me go my way in peace." She said these words in a pout, and went on her way.

"But, fair Lise, you are not to marry me. I know you consider a miller's son as beneath you."

"As agent for another I will not have anything to say to you. Adieu !"

"So! neither as suitor nor agent? Oh, Lise! the mill-hole is unfortunately too small, but if I could get through I would throw myself at once into your arms. Listen to me! Do you remember four or five years ago? You did not then want to pass for a grown-up young lady; then you would give me a kiss on Sunday when I took you on my lap and gave you a ginger-cake. Now the Herr Pastor has doubtless forbidden that. Tell me, Lise; does he not preach to you daily?"

"Would he not have good cause to preach now, and say, 'Lise, go to your work; do not let the miller's son make a fool of you'?"

Lise now really started off, although she only too gladly heard the jests of the somewhat overbearing but good and honest youth; but he called her back with a "Lise, pretty Lise; look here!" Lise turned round and smiled.

"Hold up your apron, little witch," cried the miller's son, "and you shall have a spick and span new apple from Paradise."

Before she could make up her mind what to do he threw at her feet an orange,—a fruit she had never seen.

"Eat, my Eve," called Louis, laughing; "eat the beautiful Paradise apple."

The credulous girl followed his advice, and bit into the orange. Her mouth was drawn awry by the bitter taste of the skin, but she noticed that a sweet juice flowed out of the hole. She ran off with the orange, while Louis called after her mockingly, "Lise, pretty Lise; how do you like the Paradise apple?"

The girl stood now in the parson's field, and wielded her spade with double diligence to make up for lost time. Her thoughts dwelt constantly on the lively Louis. "Perhaps he jokes so with all the girls," said she to herself, "and means nothing at all by it; and yet he is a good youth, industrious and sober,—and how beautifully his new blue clothes fit him! And it was kindly done of him,—though it was a sort of a frolic,—to give me that nice fruit. He means well, or at least not so very badly, by me."

While she was thus talking to herself she heard a hollow noise, which seemed to be coming from the village and to be drawing nearer and nearer. A strange and powerful current of

air with a breadth of only about two hundred feet came in that moment sweeping over from Kruschwitz, bearing aloft roofs and windows and even sheds and stables. The rapidly darkening air announced to the lonely girl an approaching hurricane. She hurried behind a quickset hedge which had, verily, no leaves, but was still thick enough to shield her in some measure from the wind. The *débris* of her home were whirled over her head, a large barn soared like a bird high up in the air, and after that some linen torn from the bleaching-ground. But now the wind began to roar and howl fearfully and to whistle around her and through her. Lise looked on in trembling till she saw the new windmill, borne by the irresistible force of the wind, sail like a kite over her head; at this fearful sight she fainted. But soon a fearful cracking noise aroused her: the storm had loosed its grasp of its booty, and the windmill had been hurled down only a few steps from her feet. After this fearful feat everything became suddenly still, but Lise remembered with unspeakable horror that Louis was probably buried under the ruins of the windmill. Weeping and lamenting she walked round the slight building, and it was heartfelt grief that forced tears from her eyes. "Oh, if the house had only fallen upon me!" cried she, wringing her hands. "How can I live now that he is dead? He never knew how dear every word, every look of his was to me; he never suspected that my heart belonged solely to him. I well knew that I could never be his, but still I loved him. It made me happy to see him, and now he lies crushed under the broken beams."

While the guileless girl was thus giving vent to her heartfelt grief, she suddenly heard Louis's well-known voice calling, "Lise, pretty Lise!" A shudder passed through her and dreamily she looked around, and behold! Louis's head was stuck bravely through the mill-hole, which now looked up to the skies. His eyes were full of tears. "My dearest Lise," said he, with embarrassment, "can you not help me out of this strait? The door is lying on the ground. My good child, did it need a storm to show us that we were made for one another? Break off this board; the wind has already loosed the nails. Good heavens, what an infernal flight! But, Lise, do you really love me so well? Thank heaven! I am now free and in your arms." He strained to

his heart the blushing girl, who was nearly overpowered by her joyful emotion. "God sent his storm to lead you to me, and the storm-bride has become an earth-born bride. Come, come to my father; we will tell him all and ask for his consent to our union."

Arm in arm, gazing at each other with blissful looks, the lovers returned to the village. Upon the spot where the mill had stood Louis found his family rending the air with their cries. He appeared among them like a spirit. It would be impossible to describe the delight of the old father, and when the son presented the bashful Lise as his bride he gladly, in the excess of joy, consented to the match. Soon the penniless orphan girl was transformed into a mistress miller, and she used to say, "Eve lost Paradise by eating the apple, but for me the Paradise apple has become Paradise itself."

If any one is inclined to consider this account of the wind-mill sailing through the air in the light of a fairy-tale, let him read the "*Hande und Spenerske Tidende*," No. 57, for 13th May, 1823, and if he looks under the head of "*Miscellaneous*" he can soon satisfy himself that the story of this wind-mill is not wind.

XVII.

LEKA; OR, REMINISCENCES OF A PHYSICIAN.

BY DR. KRYPOW.

TRANSLATED FROM THE SERBIAN

BY MRS. FRANCES C. HENDERSON.

I WAS born in a village on the flowery banks of the river C——. My father was a priest. The air was mild, and delicate people were often sent into our neighborhood to recruit; but we also had many poor and needy around us. The church was close to our dwelling-house; but among the old women who worshipped there, there was only one boy with whom I grew up, with whom I shared everything, and with whom I played in the grave-yard in front of the church. He was unusually fond of sweet things, and many a cake have I begged for and then handed to him privately through the fence. My friend, having the misfortune to squint a little, went by the name of Squinting Leka. He was a daring little fellow; and when he was six years old he swam like a fish and darted up the highest tree like a squirrel. He would wander away from home quite alone for hours, and felt as safe on the top of a mountain as in the house. He knew every foot-path in the neighborhood as well as every road. But though usually joyous, he even then seemed sometimes to be a prey to melancholy. When he was eight years old he came to the parsonage to be instructed with me. But though I was reading the Psalter at the end of a few months, he had not even got to spelling properly. My father tried in all possible ways to develop the boy's talents, and gave him

two lessons to my one, but in vain. Beating him, locking him up on bread and water, giving him sour looks, all were useless. Leka never put the book out of his hands, but he could get nothing out of it, and spent two years on what is always learnt in one. His whole nature seemed to change with the efforts he made. He grew weak, and always had the look of a hunted deer. He had lost the open look of childhood, and could no longer look any one full in the face. The sexton—his father—became convinced at the end of these two years that nature had not intended his son for a scholar, and gave him leave to choose his own work. Whoever had seen Leka, after he was restored to freedom, handling a pitchfork or stepping cheerfully behind a plough, would never have recognized in him the dull boy who had moped so over his book. Still less could they have thought him stupid who had seen him wading in shallow parts of the river, carrying a puppy in his arms or dragging a small shrimp-net.

When I was twelve years old I was sent to the gymnasium (government school where the classics are taught). For two years I did not return home, but the third I spent the holidays with my parents. The next day, as soon as it was light, I ran to visit all my former haunts. I had scarcely shut the garden gate when I saw Leka standing near the fence, exactly at the place where I had so often handed him a cake. His joy at seeing me was unbounded. "Steve," said he, "I have waited here the whole night. I came here as soon as I was told 'Steve has come,'" and he fawned on me like some pet animal. Then he looked straight into my eyes, saying, "You are surely not angry with me? Is there still room in your heart for Leka? I would love you just the same if I were suddenly made a prince." I immediately embraced Leka and kissed him; but this was something so new for him that he suddenly burst into tears, and, seizing my hand, he covered it with kisses. He trembled so violently that he was scarcely able to stand. "Come," said I to him, "let us go into the wood."

"Yes," replied he; "but far,—for the farther the better."

He led me through the wood and then on to the mountain, where there was a small, smooth meadow with a clear brook gurgling peacefully over its pebbly bed.

"Is it not beautiful here?" said Leka.

"And why is it beautiful?" said I, not knowing his taste exactly.

He looked at me doubtfully for a while, and then hid his face between his hands, and said, mournfully, "Leka does not know; but it is beautiful." I felt vexed at having asked the question.

Leka washed me and his puppy, and then we continued our walk as far as the frontier, whose nearness astonished me now very much. It used to seem to us so far away. We talked together; and I thought he had become bitter. He seemed ashamed of his parents, and he seemed to dislike human beings. I said to him, "Do not abuse men: they are also God's creatures." Dogs he liked, and they all liked him. As soon as he appeared on the street all the dogs in the village came to him, and would have followed him to any distance if he had allowed it. If they met him they jumped on him, licking his hands and even his face, and Leka would sit down by the side of the road so as to fully enjoy his canine friends, conversing with them, or rather talking to them, as if they were reasonable beings. If any one in the village had thrown a stone at a dog without a very good reason, he would have had to fight it out with Leka.

In a few days was the annual *fête* of the village, and my father, seeing Leka quite ragged, asked my mother to cut him out a shirt. She did so, and my sister sewed it. She also took some good homespun and cut him out a cloak. There was an old tailor in the village who was very successful in making clothes fit: to him she gave the cloak to line and trim. How nice he made it look! But it came very dear, as the tailor needed so many things which we would not have used. Leka was delighted with his new shirt and his cloak, but he did not care at all if other people admired it or not. But the other villagers did admire his new clothes very much, and greeted him now very respectfully, feeling his clothes as they passed him with ill-concealed envy. Even the women crossed the road to shake hands with him and congratulate him: some even gave him cheese and *pogache* (unleavened bread like ship-biscuit) and even butter. Any one acquainted with the sort of patriarchal life led in our villages will not be surprised to hear that even the young girls openly expressed their admiration.

Still I felt very sorry for Leka; but I did not see exactly how I could help him. It is hard to raise people who have sunk down in misery and become used to it. It was hard even to approach him to talk about it; and father, who was not brave by nature, would not undertake it. One day I said to him, "Leka, would you not like to lead a higher life and be something better than your dog?"

"Of course I should like it, Steve," replied he.

"And where do you mean to go to do it?"

"Nowhere," was his simple reply.

"Oh, fool, fool! you do not want to leave your mother."

"I do not wish to."

"But you must some day leave your father and mother. They know it and will agree to it. They are reasonable beings and not brutes."

"And what do you call brutes?"

"Why, horses, dogs,—all dumb animals."

Leka shook his head. "Even a puppy," said he, "does not like to leave his mother, though he is usually taken away forcibly."

When I repeated this to my father, he smiled, and said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit."

I was then studying rhetoric, and I brought all my store of eloquence to bear upon him, but it fell against a rock. Once, as I was taking a short walk alone, I saw at a little distance his dog Lisa watching something. I drew near and saw Leka fast asleep under a large shady tree. I went silently up to him and contemplated him. How peaceful, how blissful even seemed his sleep! At first sight one would have called him ugly, with his flaxen hair falling down over his forehead and his white eyebrows, and his slight figure. Yet, when you examined him closely, he had a beauty all his own; and now, while he was sleeping, his face seemed transformed. The squinting eye was shut, and one only saw the pure, peaceful soul marking every feature with its own heavenly calm.

While he was lying there sleeping several persons passed by, and all exclaimed, almost involuntarily, "He is a good creature who never did any one any harm!"

All sorts of wonderful images and metaphors came into my mind as I contemplated the sleeping Leka, and though they came in at hap-hazard each one seemed to give rise to an

orderly series of ideas. And first I thought, "Why is Leka different from others? Is it because he is lowly or more lowly born? And why, out of fifty men living and moving on the earth, is not more than one of sufficient importance for us to know anything about his movements? Have the other forty-nine cared to live at all? Did they care as little about life and its pleasures as Leka seemed to do? And what becomes of their children? Even Leka, insignificant as he is, may one day have children. And would Leka be proud and happy with his children?"

And then I began to wonder at his contented spirit,—at his asking for nothing, at his craving nothing but what he had. Labor at the present day is not sweet, and he who does not need to labor will certainly not do it. Peasants must work every day and the whole day, or there will not be bread enough to fill the hungry mouths; and when they have eaten to-day's bread to-morrow they must go to work again for to-morrow's bread, spite of their firm trust in Providence. Here and there one grows rich,—like Todor Glishich, the only one here who does not need to labor, as he can live on his income without exerting himself at all. But his life seems to me even emptier and more tiresome than Leka's, for, as I well know, he does nothing but eat and drink and sleep.

I do not know what Leka does early, but as he is stupid I suppose he vegetates,—somewhat like a mushroom or fungus. If he is not exactly as poor as Lazarus, he certainly eats every green berry he finds and wild sorrel. Leka never stays at home, and never feels the sweetness nor fulfils the duties of the relations of brother or son. But is it only he who lives under the same roof who has these duties to perform? He has still seven brothers and sisters who are living at home, and who get on very pleasantly with their father, the sexton. And still their life seems to me empty and void.

And so my ideas went round in a circle without finding the desired solution, but always meeting the fact that Leka was stupid. If I had been a fortune-teller mixing the cards, fate would certainly always have been against Leka. But I am not writing a learned dissertation,—my collegiate studies had not at that time carried me quite so far.

But these holidays, like all others, came to an end, and I was forced to return to the gymnasium. If my father had looked pale and melancholy even before the country vehicle drove up which was to take me once more away from my home, when it had come Leka was almost beside himself with grief. He was standing by the fence at the place where we had so often met, holding on with one hand and with the other wiping off every now and then the tears which were running down his face. The leave-taking was very painful for me, and he noticed that each one was making me some little parting gift. Leka came up in his turn, and embracing me, he said, "God bless you, Steve; take Lisa with you." This dog Lisa was what Leka loved best on earth,—no price that could have been offered him would have induced him to sell her. Leka ran by the carriage as long as we were in the plain, in fact until we took the boat; then he stood and looked after me, waving his handkerchief as long as he could see me.

On the way I could not help thinking about Leka and trying to divine the cause of his peculiarities. That brought me again within the domain of metaphysics. My father had left me after giving me his blessing, and I did not take any interest in the driver's remarks on the state of the crops and the weakness of this year's lambs. Little by little there arose within me a strong desire to study medicine. When I first wrote to my father on the subject his reply brought me a regular lecture. "You good-for-nothing fellow!" wrote he; "you deceitful pigmy! it is not from any neglect on the part of your parents that you are turning out so badly. To think that I should receive such an insult in my old age! Till now you had been my joy and my pride. May God himself punish that sneaking sexton for wishing to devote you to eternal perdition by putting such an idea into your head! That is what one gets for associating with paupers." If my mother was also angry because I wished to study medicine I do not know. "Oh, my God," thought I, "thou knowest that I only wish to study medicine so as to be able to help the poor and the suffering; what is there wrong in that?"

I waited a month and then I renewed my request, but with no better success. I was not discouraged, and seized every opportunity to study Latin privately. Our rector was very

much surprised when he found that I had made some headway in it, and allowed me then to have lessons. I waited some time for a fortunate day, and then went and prostrated myself before the rector. "Arise, my son," said he, kindly, "and tell me what it is you want." I told him of my wish and my father's opposition. The rector shook his head and looked at me from head to foot, and told me it was a most unfortunate choice for one who, like myself, had been destined by his parents to the service of the altar, and that it was much better to try to heal the diseases of the soul than those of the body. He dismissed me after a quarter of an hour's exhortation, giving me the life of a holy patriarch to read. I read it carefully, but it did not conquer my desire to study medicine.

In the next long vacation I returned to the village to my parents. Leka had become shyer than ever, and at his own request had been hired out as a shepherd, and he never came home. He came, however, to visit me. He had on a strangely-made, dirty, ill-fitting garment. It made my heart ache to look at him, and he talked in a melancholy, desponding manner so that I almost felt like weeping.

In the course of the year I had positively refused ever to study divinity, at which my father expressed great indignation. I was very weary of so much opposition, but I remained firm. God helped me in the hour of my greatest need. In the neighboring *palanka* (a size between a town and a village) there was a celebrated church. It was quite an important place, with a good deal of business and some wealth. The priest there occasionally invited us on the feast-days, and Pope Basilius and the Popadija (his wife), my father (without my mother), the teacher, and I always went to vespers together. This was a great feast, and some merchants with their wives and some young men came in on horseback. Just before service began the old priest came in with his wife and two sons. I do not know how it happened, but I felt very joyous just then, although a little while before I had been very unhappy. I believe I felt unhappy partly because no accident had happened to the carriage and to us in coming down the hill. After service I went to walk along the bank of the river, and suddenly I saw Leka by my side. I do not know if he had also been in the church; I do not know, as

I never look around me in church. A boat was moored to the shore. Some villagers were lying on the grass dressed in their Sunday clothes. We went a little farther on and then saw a man, who seemed to be the owner of the boat, and who was singing merrily. I went up to him, and said, "Brother, will you allow us to take your boat for a row?" "Willingly," said he. "We know your father. Mijo, Mijo! loosen the boat for him."

Mijo, a Liliputian sailor without trousers, came unwillingly out of the water where he had been wading, loosened the boat and gave it to us. I took the helm, and Leka began to row down the river C——. In the mean time it grew dark and the moon shone out brightly; on one side of the river the water looked like silver, while the other side, on which our boat was, lay in deep shade. The dew began to fall and a slight fog arose, to which the rays of the moon lent a sort of diamond sheen.

Leka seemed very contented, and unceasingly bathed his heated face with the river water and let it trickle on his hair, which fell, as usual, over his forehead. "Oh, but this is beautiful, Steve!" said he; to which I replied, "Most beautiful! charming!" which seemed to make him very happy.

Leka was a master-hand at the oar. Sometimes he would let the boat lie motionless on the water, and then let her glide along with the easy motion of a swan. At a distance we heard the noise of people who were merry-making, and of others returning to their homes. At last we came to the landing in our village. I got out and went home, and Leka rowed back to give the boat to her owner.

I had intended to go at once to bed; but a vehicle stood before our door. What could it be? My mother had not been out. She met me at the door, and when I asked her if anything was the matter, she said, "Go to bed, my child." She looked so anxiously down the street that I asked again, "What is it?"

"Oh, nothing," said she. "With God's help he will soon be better."

"He?—who?—what?" said I; and I trembled as if I had the ague.

"God, who knows all, alone knows if he will recover."

I rushed into the room. My father lay on the floor: he

had had an attack of apoplexy. I still hear his stertorous breathing. I seemed to have three hands. I picked him up and carried him to his bed and poured water on his head; but when the doctor came and tried to bleed him, and the blood would not flow, I leaned against the wall, scarcely knowing if I were dead or alive. My father looked anxiously at me and tried to speak.

"What is it?" said I.

With difficulty he articulated, "I have not done right by you; forgive me." And with these words the pope's pure spirit passed away.

After my father's death my mother never scolded me, but quietly consented to my giving up the study of divinity and taking up that of medicine.

In looking over the list of lectures I found that one professor gave, out of the regular course lectures, some on spiritual diseases. I immediately inscribed myself, and was an unfailing attendant; but I was at that time so badly prepared that I really understood very little of what he said. "Psychology," declared he, "is by far the most important branch of medical science; but it is also the one on which it is the most difficult to throw sufficient light. Neither metaphysics nor philosophy," said he, "can show so plainly as psychology the intimate connection between mind and body. She teaches us that all mental and moral diseases arise from this same connection, and that if the mind could exist apart from the body it would enjoy unbroken health." I must say that I considered such assertions as useless and incapable of proof.

I learned by heart what was the most urgently necessary, and accustomed myself by degrees to the investigation of mental diseases, and read every book which I could find relating to them. On Sundays and feast-days only I visited and mixed with people. But my chosen branch was never absent from my mind; and I studied the persons whom I met, and compared them with Leka,—as he looked that day when he was so quietly sleeping. But it was especially the eccentric Leka and the talented persons whom I studied.

The chief doctor in the university was a very benevolent man, but ready to take offence and to fight at the least provocation. With us he was very pleasant, as we were very submissive, and always addressed him as your "Your Excellency," which

gratified him very much. He would often say, "In this little spot of ground I am equal to the Czar himself." He had a very unpleasant habit of grating his teeth together while he was speaking, but he insisted upon it that Voltaire had also done it. He had great influence over the sick. When about to perform an operation, or when he wished to gain the consent of the patient for its performance, he would say, "Oh! ye shining heavens, ye powers of earth, and ye spirits of the mighty deep, come to my aid, and help me to combat this disease!" The patient would generally laugh and allow him to do what he pleased with him.

He was entirely wanting in modesty or sense of shame. There was an old man in the infirmary with whom he often stopped to converse, though he was only half-witted. This fellow would paint love-passages (in words) without a veil, so that my hair would stand on end; but the doctor would only laugh, and say, "Is that really true?"

I often had occasion to observe persons coming from Porech (an island in the Danube, belonging to Serbia). They always seemed to me deficient in intellect. One there was who, like Don Quixote, was somewhat erratic on the subject of knight-errantry. I learned that his father had died of indigestion, and his grandfather of phthisic. He was so peculiar in his intercourse with his associates that not one of them dared to help himself out of the same dish; and the servant was not allowed to remove anything that had once been put on the table till he had gone off into another room. He was so sly and secretive that, as a rascal, he must have been successful.

Even nearly idiots claim the right to think and talk about politics; but, of course, they merely echo the opinions of some one or other of their friends, choosing between them. I would gladly prove this by extracts from my diary; but they would be tedious, as they contain also a diagnosis of idiocy. The principal signs of a deficient intellect are:

- a. A want of method, or an inability to place the true valuation upon the objects which surround us.
- b. A diseased obstinacy and an inability to bear dampness without an increase of mental weakness.
- c. A stupid and constant improvidence.

I must give here one extract from my diary:

Subject 29.—Varoshanka Maria Bychivia: Sanguine temperament; inclined to fever; 30 years old; married.

This woman was in my service as cook, and thus I had the opportunity of observing her carefully, and noticing many psychological facts of interest. *Alienatio mentale* did not exist; but she was always *fancying* that she had received insults and injuries. She was without circumspection, though not without certain capabilities, which showed themselves principally in deliberations and reasonings on remittable sins, and by always taking a firm stand on the side of providence and shifting all blame from it. As a woman, Maria's mind might be said to be above mediocrity; but she was a regular chatter-box, and, as I say, was always inventing insults to herself,—showing clearly the diseased mind.

While this woman still lived with her husband she was in the habit of stealing, or, in other words, carrying off her own valuables and his: this is a pathological fact. Before they had separated her husband often came to see her on week-days early in the morning. One day Maria took from him his last *para* to buy some wine and some butter to make cake. He discovered it, and reproached her with it, scolding a good deal about it. She fell into a lethargy which lasted till Monday, and when she awoke she complained of a violent headache, which lasted for seven days, after which time she was able to do her work again.

When she entered my service I positively forbade her ever buying wine, as drinking it was very injurious to her. I found that was touching her in a tender spot, as she replied that she was a poor, injured orphan, and that she bought wine for her own pleasure and not for mine; that her husband could not prevent her from drinking wine, and I should not either.

Our town was rather peculiar in one respect,—viz., that the inhabitants were so well satisfied with the order of things. The houses and surrounding farms were neat and well kept. The country was dry, and flowers, vegetables, and fruit surrounded the town. There were, of course, merchants and artisans,—for how could a town exist without those? These all lived where it was the easiest to find them, and all were interested in the general well-being of the community. Masters—*i.e.*, tailors, shoemakers, etc.—and their families were in-

dustrious and simple in their habits. Coffee-houses with high prices were not much frequented.

Our town counted about five thousand inhabitants. Of this number about two hundred tired themselves doing nothing and the other four thousand eight hundred were busy with their daily work. Those who labored never needed a doctor, but those who did not were scarcely ever free from some ache or pain. Many often came to me to seek a cure for their bodies who really only needed it for their minds.

Once a request was sent for me to come to Mrs. Anka A——, as she was very ill.

Mrs. Anka A—— was a woman of about thirty years of age, whose wishes and doings interested many people besides her husband. He was a rich man and as fond of pleasure as his wife, but they had carried their chain together for ten years.

I found Mrs. Anka in bed, with her eyes a good deal swelled and some fever and pain in her chest. Everything told of a matrimonial quarrel: the children were going and coming crying; on the floor and in one corner lay pieces of broken pipes, in another corner a meerschaum pipe.

"You look excited, madam," said I. "I must prescribe some tranquillizing drops for you; but you must not trifle with them,—you must not take more than twenty drops at one time."

The patient brightened up and bit her lips.

"To judge by the signs, you are suffering from indigestion. As well as you live, it is not surprising."

"Nothing on earth shall induce me to go to the village on our estate!"

"Surprising! I should think it would be much pleasanter there in summer than in town."

"What do you mean by such foolish talk?"

"Why, you require quiet,—the most perfect repose. Indeed, under other circumstances I will not answer for your restoration to perfect health."

"Doctor, I am the most miserable woman in the world. It would be a gain to me if I were to die! And who is it who treats me so badly? why Nika, my accursed husband. Save me, doctor; save me!"

"My dear patient, I am afraid the apothecary has no rem-

edy for such evils. Here is my prescription. You are slandering Nika, who is a very pleasant-tempered man. Your estate is in a very pleasant and beautiful part of the country; provisions there are excellent, and you can take books and work and music with you. There you can have the perfect repose which is so needful for you."

"It is easy for you to talk; you know nothing about wedded life!"

"I do not know it by experience, but I can imagine it. There must be mutual concessions and a desire to please on both sides. When one has a very strong desire to do something the other ought to try to give up his or her own wishes. Tell me, is not this the truth?"

"You are really encouraging! But talk to my husband a little."

"Excuse me, madam; but a long practice in your family emboldens me to be frank. I would suggest something to you."

"What is it you wish, doctor? You are a friend of our family, you——"

"Do you want to get anything out of your husband?"

"Oh, no; I would be willing to say to the whole world, It was my silly aunt who urged me to this unfortunate marriage."

"And you did not wish to marry?"

"I neither loved nor admired him. Now, I have a little flirtation with Persom, you know. May the devil take him!"

"Very good! Am I to understand, then, that it is your wish to live with him, as you both have property?"

"But, doctor, what are you looking at me for? I can assure you that my good name is dearer to me than life itself. And how the world would talk!"

"That is another thing. But how time has slipped away! I must go. As I have said, take twenty drops at a time of my preparation and again at night, and I will call again to-morrow."

As I was going away I was called in by Mr. Nika, whose face bore unmistakable signs of anger.

"Doctor, dear doctor, do give me a few minutes of your time."

"Just now it is really precious to me."

"Doctor, you are an honorable man, and I have always considered you a learned and sensible man; you are of a good family; you do not waste your time running round eating good dinners: will you promise to be candid with me?"

"What is it you desire of me?"

"How did you find my wife?"

"Her case is not dangerous, so your mind can be easy. I have prescribed some drops for her."

"May the devil carry her off for the sake of order and decency! As far as I am concerned she may drop down dead anywhere, only not here in the house. She is not a woman, but a serpent! Don't talk about her."

"I do not understand you."

"What is the matter with you to-day, doctor? She is not ill at all."

"You must be careful, if you desire an heir."

"An heir? I could hope for an heir! Doctor, my wife steps aside, though she conceals it; she bears my name, but she dishonors it."

"I do not understand you, Mr. Nika; but perhaps it might be better for both of you if you were to live apart."

"Now, is it worth while to send for a doctor to get such an idea as that? No, indeed; that would not do at all. I have always been used to order and decency. My mother is still living, and what would she say if we were to brave public opinion thus?"

"Excuse me, Mr. Nika, if I cannot remain longer. I have other calls to make."

"And what is it is the matter with her—with my wife?"

"I cannot tell yet. I did not see her maid; she might enlighten me as to her mistress's habitual state."

"Ah, good heavens! what is that? I saw Mr. Persom yesterday myself."

"Do you know what? This illness of your wife's seems quite sudden."

"Dear doctor, I have always honored you. The priests live by the altar and doctors by the dissecting-knife. Allow me to present you with this golden snuff-box as a mark of my particular friendship. At the same time——"

"You must not wonder if a doctor has sense but no tongue."

Mr. Nika embraced me, and his blue lips and anxiously sweating face touched mine most unpleasantly.

Next door to me lives a rich merchant, proud of his property, but stingy. His house is always closed to visitors, he never invites a friend, and he does not take the slightest interest in what his fellow-citizens are doing. In fact, at the time of which I am speaking he only kept one man-servant,—as the female servant had launched some amorous looks at him, which frightened him so that he instantly dismissed her and would not take another. His neighbors thought the real reason was to save a few *novaks* (a coin equal to half a cent). I met him one day, and he stopped me and said, "Doctor, I was just coming to ask your advice as to my mode of living." I knew that he was fond of going to the taverns, where he met young men and heard all sorts of low gossip. As soon as I heard his voice I knew that he had just been drinking at the tavern. Although I did not like him, he interested me in a psychological point of view. Joy was shining in his face, apparently without any particular cause.

I immediately thought of something I had just been reading in the *Augsburger Allgemeine-Zeitung*, a paper I like very much. This was an article on mental diseases which quite confirmed my own observations. If I read Titus Livy, Tacitus, or Gibbon I find one fact in them all,—viz., that history records as many acts of folly as of greatness. Chronic folly and its easy cure are everywhere to be met with. So many sovereigns have had fantastic tastes and have pitched battles for their fancies. That is particularly the case in ancient history, where human nature stands out in bolder relief. Thus, Cyrus rushes needlessly to the Holy Land, and often the fate of a kingdom was perilled for a maiden. On that account I love the study of history.

Were not the torturing of Christians by the heathen and afterwards of heretics by the Christians also acts of folly? When men ceased torturing their enemies and eating the flesh of wild beasts they still did not stop doing one another all the harm they possibly could. How bitter has not the enmity been, even of late years, between the French and Germans! And was it not utter folly to shed so much blood in order to be able to sleep a little farther from the spot where they had come into the world?

Travellers and chroniclers lose their interest for us when we enter an anatomical and pathological cabinet. We see then only folly in the Indian who lets himself be crushed under the car of Juggernaut to insure his eternal happiness, or in the woman who offers herself a living sacrifice on her husband's funeral-pile. We have had instances enough of folly in modern times without visiting classic lands, and at the bottom there is little difference between Asiatic and European stupidity.

I cannot lay down my pen without giving the "Moral" to these few pages as my slight contribution to the treasury of science,—viz., that mental diseases are much more common than is generally supposed, and that such diseases, even where they are not recognized as such, are often the cause of crime and irregularity of life. Bentham said once that no scoundrel had a head for arithmetic; and Aristotle said of Anaxagoras that he was the only sober man of his age. Spinoza said the immoral man was always wanting in sense. Further, I would remark that the atmosphere has great influence over mental diseases, just as it has over the health of the body, and that they are particularly prevalent in all places where there are miasmatic exhalations. In some places the air and water combined produce *goitre*, and *goitre* is generally accompanied by more or less idiocy, either total or partial.

XVIII.

ROZA.

A PLAY IN THREE ACTS.

BY FR. CELESTIN.

TRANSLATED FROM THE SLAVONIAN, A SLAVISH TONGUE
SPOKEN IN KRAIN, CARINTHIA, AND
STEIERMARK,

BY MRS. FRANCES C. HENDERSON.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

ROZA.

FURLI, *her uncle, and guardian of her estates.*

BARON MIRKO, *her lover.*

ANZE, *his servant.*

MARJETICA, *ROZA'S servant.*

It is played in a large town, in ROZA'S salons.

FIRST ACT.

FIRST SCENE.

MARJETICA, *humming a tune to herself.*

"Were I a green tree
On the hill-side,
My love I would see
From far and wide."

MARJETICA. Ha! ha! I am proud of my voice. It is quite as good as if I were a fine lady. I know mankind; and in two days the baron will be as friendly as ever. He has plenty of time always to sit and chat with me. [*She smiles.*] To be sure I am not hard-hearted. Here he comes!

SECOND SCENE.

BARON MIRKO, ANZE, and MARJETICA.

MARJETICA. Sir Baron!

BARON. Please to announce me to your honored lady.

MARJETICA. And what shall I tell my lady you want of her?

BARON. To pay my humble respects to her.

MARJETICA. I will tell her.

ANZE. Marjetica, you do not even look at me.

MARJETICA. Mr. Footman, every one must bide his time
[*To the BARON.*] Please to take a scat, sir. [*She goes.*]

THIRD SCENE.

BARON and ANZE, near the door.

BARON. Shall I, then, see you, my beloved? What happiness to see once more those lovely features,—a sight of which might well cause the earth to swerve from its orbit!

ANZE. [*Aside.*] Oh! my master is thinking aloud. Lovers are all alike.

BARON. Do not be smiling over your own thoughts. Put them into words, so that I may laugh with you; or let us rather together praise the might of love.

ANZE. [*Very much embarrassed.*] Oh, sir!

BARON. I do not fear to grow poor in love though I give all I have and ever can have, for will she not give me hers which is better and fuller far?

ANZE. Master, I am going home.

BARON. Home?

ANZE. Yes, yes. It is written in that Italian pamphlet—which I have learned by heart—that it is impossible to please your master when he is in love. You must help him in his love-affairs as much as you can, but you need not expect to give him satisfaction. [*He goes.*]

FOURTH SCENE.

BARON, alone.

BARON. No; he is wrong, for love is in itself pleasure

and the loving heart is mild and gentle. I hear some one : is it she ?

FIFTH SCENE.

ROZA and the BARON.

ROZA. Here I am, my good friend. I am sure you will be so good as to excuse my delay. I had not expected you. Have you forgotten our agreement ?

BARON. How could I do otherwise than come ? I am young ; I am rich ; I am in love. I would make your life one long dream of love !

ROZA. My dear friend, I will help you to be happy as long as you are my guest.

BARON. Shall we not be one ? Is not marriage the fusion of two hearts into one ?

ROZA. How you talk ! and then when you are married you men expect women to be your slaves. I am also in love, and with Mr. Merzarja. The valleys look to me now as if they were full of gold, and the mountains as if they were made of diamonds !

BARON. I am a poor poet, or I would write verses expressive of your feelings and mine.

ROZA. Praise the new gospel which preaches love to man. I like free love. I want no domestic tyrant to curtail my freedom. If I choose to give any one a kiss, I mean to remain free to do so.

BARON. Give me a kiss ?

ROZA. You had better keep quiet. You have a bitter enemy, and that is the steward of this estate, my uncle and guardian.

BARON. The steward of this estate ?

ROZA. Yes, he. Now I have warned you.

BARON. I have done him no wrong.

ROZA. No ; only he is very gallant, and he always assures me that I am an angel ; and he talks—— You understand.

BARON. And you prefer him to me ?

ROZA. Yes. You always talk as if a woman were your captive. You only give barren words. You have no idea how a free hand opens the door to love.

BARON. I am not well acquainted with the female heart ; but I should never have dared to offer——

ROZA. And yet you must know that youth craves enjoyment. If any one would only emancipate us women, we could enjoy life quite as much as you.

BARON. In the grave we shall all be alike and all be free.

ROZA. Oh, no, no! That likeness is dark and sad. My heart would fail me were I to think of it. My heart is now full of love—nay, running over with longing—for my God!

BARON. Love I can buy, but death rules us all. He does not change,—his power can never become less. He can snatch from me what I love the best,—you. I love you,—not as a youth, but as a man who knows the world can love when he finds his ideal.

ROZA. How you can talk! And yet, if I were to yield you this weak heart, you would soon scatter your vows to the winds.

BARON. I cannot say all I feel: my tongue fails me in your presence. I will go, however sweet it be to remain near the loved one, but anon you may be kinder. Adieu! [*He goes.*]

SIXTH SCENE.

ROZA and MARJETICA.

MARJETICA. How would it be possible not to laugh?

ROZA. So you have been listening again! But tell me, my good girl, do you think I can trust him and believe all he says?

MARJETICA. I cannot say, as to-day I have not spoken with Anze.

ROZA. With Anze?

MARJETICA. Yes; servants often know their own masters better than we can.

ROZA. And you have been listening? For shame!

MARJETICA. You ordered me yourself to try to find out something about his master from Anze. I could not very well ask him in his master's presence.

ROZA. Marjetica, you are very bold.

MARJETICA. And now you are scolding me! You will trust neither me nor the baron.

ROZA. Yes, I feel I can trust the baron. Do not ask Anze.

MARJETICA. And you do not trust me as much as him?

ROZA. No.

MARJETICA. Then you are already in love with him!

SECOND ACT.

FIRST SCENE.

MARJETICA.

MARJETICA. How is it that I have not seen Anzeta? I would like to have a good chat with him. I know him now and like him, but love—that is another thing. I am not a bird to be caught with chaff!

SECOND SCENE.

ROZA and MARJETICA.

ROZA. Marjetica, I think that in my age one must enjoy one's self, and the night seems the best time to make merry. What do you think of it?

MARJETICA. You are right. I am a merry maiden, and I really do not care to waste my sighs upon the desert air, but I would like to have a gay time for once.

ROZA. Only take care that your laughing does not soon turn to sighing.

MARJETICA. Now there! you are sighing yourself!

ROZA. Marjetica, those who are in love have but few happy days to expect.

MARJETICA. There! you are sighing again! How soon you have changed your opinion! Do you really class yourself among those who are in love? What will your uncle say to that? I feel like running away!

ROZA. Then go! [MARJETICA goes.]

THIRD SCENE.

ROZA, *alone*.

ROZA. Anze has really convinced *me* of the baron's constancy. But I cannot level mountains: what can I say to my uncle to change his opinion of him? He has cared for

me and my interests so faithfully; why should he not help me in this strait? And yet I cannot understand myself how I should have changed so much in so short a time.

FOURTH SCENE.

FURIJ *and* ROZA.

FURIJ. My dear little Roza, you do not wear to-day the happy, careless look I like to see on your face.

ROZA. Dear uncle, you have been even more than a father to me, and I must acknowledge to you that I do not feel as light-hearted as usual.

FURIJ. Tell me, my little gold-fish, what can your uncle and guardian do to restore your gayety? I do not want you to break your wings against the wires like a caged bird. Many a pretty bird has died in a golden cage, and many a pretty girl awaits with longing her wedding-day.

ROZA. Do not consider that danger as imaginary.

FURIJ. Kind fortune has showered worldly riches upon you, and in those lines many read hope.

ROZA. Verily, dear uncle, you do not flatter me.

FURIJ. In your place many a one would have become conceited.

ROZA. Not if she had any inward worth.

FURIJ. Inward worth? That is hard to measure, whereas gold can be weighed. My little dove, you have almost acknowledged yourself to be in love. [*Aside.*] I might have lost a million! [*To ROZA.*] Do you know I could even feel jealous of the sunlight which shines upon you?

ROZA. Dear uncle, do you really love me so?

FURIJ. Not for your beauty alone, but for your many virtues. [*Aside.*] I came very near losing a million!

ROZA. You have been so careful of me, dear uncle!

FURIJ. And who would not have taken care of you gladly, —of you, radiant with youth and beauty?

ROZA. I always liked to be praised, especially by you.

FURIJ. I would jump into the sea to serve you! Your dying father entrusted you to my care, and I have watched with delight your charms expand in beautiful harmony with your growth in stature. Reflect, Roza: till now I have concealed my love, I have left you free.

ROZA. [*Aside.*] So have I concealed my love for the baron. [*To her uncle.*] The heart cannot be forced, but it goes whither it is drawn by love.

FURIJ. [*Aside.*] Anze told me the truth: she loves me! [*To ROZA.*] Oh, my Rosita, how happy you make me with this sweet confession! I had thought you had never felt the power of love.

ROZA. I appeal to the benevolence of your kind heart.

FURIJ. Oh, my darling, my heart must be hard as stone if I could refuse you any request!

ROZA. [*Aside.*] How strangely uncle talks to-day! [*To her uncle.*] I really feel ashamed to tell you, dear uncle, but I am sure you will pardon my weakness if I make a full confession.

FURIJ. Now I fear nothing; life has no more clouds for me! [*Aside.*] Now I have no fear; the million is mine!

ROZA. I rejoice to discover in you the fire of youth.

FURIJ. [*Aside.*] How she loves me! [*To ROZA.*] It is the light of your own joyous youth which has vivified the ashes of mine!

ROZA. You are becoming quite a *galant*, uncle.

FURIJ. Behold me on my knees before you, love's obedient slave!

ROZA. Good heavens! [*Runs away.*]

FIFTH SCENE.

FURIJ, *alone.*

FURIJ. Victory! She runs away, but she loves me! My lovely ward! my golden Rosita! How she blushed when I owned my love, thus confessing a passion equal to my own! I see myself already with a golden key,—lord of all her wealth!

SIXTH SCENE.

ANZE and FURIJ.

FURIJ. [*Believing himself still alone.*] Anze sold himself to me.

ANZE. So it seems.

FURIJ. You can carry the news to the baron.

ANZE. Something you have invented?

FURIJ. No; what you betrayed to me,—that Roza loves me.

ANZE. Do you mean that you have bewitched her?

FURIJ. Unasked, she confessed her love for me.

ANZE. Bless me! It is as if one were to see water spit fire!

FURIJ. What will your master say?

ANZE. Oh, he will soon console himself.

FURIJ. Come here and sit down by me, my good Anze. Have you anything else to confide to me?

ANZE. [*Aside.*] Fool!

FURIJ. What do you say?

ANZE. I see some sparrows on that roof.

FURIJ. What will your master say?

ANZE. Oh, he won't care. He has another love, which will soon make him forget the old one. [*Aside.*] Master must needs forgive me that lie.

FURIJ. That is right; but I cannot understand that he should choose you for a confidant.

ANZE. Ha, ha! ha, ha! ha, ha!

FURIJ. Hi, hi! hi, hi!

ANZE. So it is. But no wonder: I could not help seeing their mutual coldness; and it is all explained if she is your honor's bride.

FURIJ. How you talk! That is simply impossible!

ANZE. Roza herself invited me to the wedding, and assured me that she was your betrothed.

FURIJ. And I who did not even dare to ask her to plight me her troth! [*He goes.*]

SEVENTH SCENE.

ANZE, *alone.*

ANZE. Go, you old fool, go! When you want a bride always send for Anze. I'll freshen up your old memory for you. You wanted to hire me to betray my master, as you thought every one could be bought for gold. Take care, Anze; your impudence may cost you dear, but I mean to strike for my master while the iron is hot. Our notary is ready, and when the contract is to be signed, master has only

to step in before the uncle, who will not be on his guard, as he thinks I am on his side.

EIGHTH SCENE.

ROZA and ANZE.

ANZE. You see me struck dumb with surprise, honored lady.

ROZA. My uncle—— [*Aside.*] I know not what to answer.

ANZE. Your uncle? Is he a suitable match for you? Have you not suddenly lost your senses?

ROZA. Lost my senses! Oh, I am so miserable!

ANZE. May I not act the doctor's part? Is it too late to propose a remedy?

ROZA. But my uncle is not an invalid.

ANZE. I would like to save *you* from unceasing regrets.

ROZA. And verily, Anze, my only hope rests on you. In you is my trust. Has not God himself sent you to me to rescue me from this misery?

ANZE. From misery!—you?

ROZA. Yes; since my guardian has taken up this strange idea.

ANZE. Ideas do not hurt unless you let them produce action.

ROZA. That may be a moral truth, but marriage is a reality.

ANZE. Is it that which causes your unhappiness?

ROZA. I am so young to wed!

ANZE. Especially with an old man.

ROZA. I would like—— Oh, how unhappy I am! And life has hitherto seemed so bright and joyous!

ANZE. There may be relief from everything but death.

ROZA. Heretofore I have obeyed my guardian gladly, and listened dutifully to his reproofs, but I cannot force my heart to turn this way or that, according to his will.

ANZE. It is not a blade of grass waving in the wind.

ROZA. He likes you: could you not use your influence with him in my favor?

ANZE. Influence? Oh! excuse me.

ROZA. Yes. He grants you his confidence.

ANZE. You do me too much honor. But can you not obey your guardian in this?

ROZA. What! and marry some one whom I do not love?

ANZE. Dear lady, dare I speak frankly to you?

ROZA. Speak! speak!

ANZE. [*Aside.*] Now, Anze, now is your time. [*To ROZA.*] To tell the truth, I can only think of my poor master. He has no other thought in life but you, no other aim in life but to win you.

ROZA. How unjustly I have been treated!

ANZE. Before he left home to come here he was so sad that he scarcely ever said a word.

ROZA. I like to hear that.

ANZE. My conscience is beginning to reproach me for betraying his secrets, but he had really begun, in his want of hope, to grow weary of life.

ROZA. How pleasant it is to hear that!

ANZE. In his despair he even began to think that God would refuse him eternal as well as temporal happiness.

ROZA. And I seem to myself so faithless!

ANZE. Even in his despair the only word he uttered was your loved name.

ROZA. I can only wonder how I should have been blind to such deep affection, to such constancy. O my God, thou dost chastise me fearfully!

ANZE. [*Aside.*] She is growing softer every minute!

ROZA. The brightest light in nature seems to me the light of love. My uncle has always appeared to me deserving of respect, but I cannot change the filial love I bear him to a warmer feeling such as I have read about. Had I a sister I would not confide even to her the feeling which fills my heart and say that there is one who reigns supreme over my thoughts.

ANZE. [*Aside.*] She has betrayed herself! [*To ROZA.*] But to poor little Anze you can safely tell everything.

ROZA. But first you must go to my uncle.

ANZE. Of course, I will go if you wish it, and tell him everything you want him to hear.

ROZA. Do not attempt to conceal anything that I shall tell you!

ANZE. How you misunderstand your humble servant

ANZE! I could almost weep to see my motives so little appreciated. Last night I had a glorious idea, and I came so joyfully to you; but if you do not trust me my idea is fruitless.

ROZA. Speak! what was your idea?

ANZE. I had really hoped it would cheer you up.

ROZA. Speak, my good Anze, and tell me your idea.

ANZE. But you must promise not to be angry with me.

ROZA. Do not be afraid. I am so unhappy! like a drowning man, I would grasp a straw.

ANZE. Well, then——

ROZA. Well, dear Anze?

ANZE. You must be somebody's wife.

ROZA. How you talk!

ANZE. How much better it would be for you to marry my master! and it is so easy to have the same bride, but to change the bridegroom.

ROZA. I am so unhappy!

ANZE. Who could prevent my master's stepping in and putting his name before your guardian knows what is going on?

ROZA. Oh, I am so unhappy! [*She goes.*]

NINTH SCENE.

ANZE, *alone.*

ANZE. She is now as soft as wax! ha, ha! Now I must hurry to my master. Anze, you must lose no time now: afterwards you will have time to sit down and rejoice over the success of your schemes. Anze, my boy, you are in luck!

THIRD ACT.

FIRST SCENE.

ROZA and MARJETICA.

ROZA. Marjetica!

MARJETICA. Command me.

ROZA. Shall I tell you a piece of news?

MARJETICA. Yes, if it is that you are going to marry the baron.

ROZA. Alas! no, Marjetica; it is not that.

MARJETICA. What, are more clouds gathering over our heads? It is not for one like me to give advice to your ladyship.

ROZA. And yet I need advice.

MARJETICA. You will find no one who desires your welfare more sincerely than your faithful Marjetica.

ROZA. Flatterer!

MARJETICA. For a time I thought I saw the blue sky overhead while you talked a while ago of the natural desire of young people for enjoyment.

ROZA. So, so! Now look again and tell me where you see fresh clouds gathering?

MARJETICA. [*Aside.*] I feel everything drying up within me! [*To ROZA.*] My lady, I see clouds gathering over the path of true love. Love is like the gilding of life: it is the reflection of the rays of the sun shining from above upon us. But it must be true love. You are a bride, but——

ROZA. Whose bride?

MARJETICA. Why, your guardian's.

ROZA. Indeed, I am not.

MARJETICA. Here comes the baron. [*She goes.*]

SECOND SCENE.

ROZA and the BARON.

BARON. You are alone?

ROZA. I have withdrawn myself from the tumult of society.

BARON. Excuse me if I say that it is a crime to deprive others of the sight of such beauty and such amiability. Is it perhaps that you have sought solitude to nurse your strength for war against all *mankind*?

ROZA. Oh, no, not that; but solitude is the best place to heal the wounds society has inflicted.

BARON. Can you be suffering from any wound?

ROZA. [*Aside.*] Why has he not gone away forever? [*To the BARON.*] It is not possible for me to beat about the bush any longer! Allow me to ask you a direct question: when is a certain important event to take place?

BARON. [*Aside.*] She wishes to drive me away! [*To Roza.*] I should, of course, like it to take place as speedily as possible.

ROZA. And I must tell you my views in a few words. As a matter of course, I cannot see it unmoved if a man comes to me with words of love in his mouth while his heart has only room for the image of another. If I hesitated to yield to the wishes of a lover, I had, nevertheless, always believed in the truth of his vows.

BARON. And do you really believe him no longer?

ROZA. The more the bud unfolds its petals in the noonday sun the more blighting is the unexpected midnight frost. If we have raised an idol on a pedestal, and find it to be but clay, how great must his fall in our esteem be! I loved with all the warmth of a fresh, unspoiled heart, and now I find myself despoiled of all I loved,—you!

BARON. This is too much happiness,—too much for one heart to bear at once. No, dear Roza, I do not love another.

ROZA. You have not another bride to whom you have plighted your troth?

BARON. I came as soon as I received your note.

ROZA. My note? Please to show it me. [*She takes it and reads.*] “Baron Mirko, I request the pleasure of your company. ROZA.” What do I see here? Marjetica’s handwriting! Anze! Marjetica! Now I begin to understand how Marjetica thought she saw blue sky overhead.

THIRD SCENE.

FURIJ, ROZA, and the BARON.

FURIJ. Oh, my beautiful Rosita! The sight of you would turn the dreariest winter to gladsome spring! You are like the pure lily, whose color the rays of the sun change to a golden hue! Thou art like the green tree in a dark wood in which the winds of heaven play, drawing sweet music out of every leaf! Thy brilliant eyes would make the flash of lightning seem tame and dull in comparison; and thou drawest, chained to thy triumphal car, the hearts of all who see thee! [*Aside.*] I think that is putting it strong enough.

ROZA. [*Aside.*] How can I answer? What can I say to destroy this most unfortunate attachment of my uncle’s?

FURIJ. How you blush ! You cast your eyes to the ground to hide the love which shines in them for me ! Cupid is lurking in them, playing his sweet pranks. You will be a lovelier bride than the sun has ever shone upon ! [*Aside.*] I am afraid she will believe all this flattery. [*To the BARON.*] Excuse me, Baron ; but I expect to be congratulated very soon. I believe I must also congratulate you. If I have heard aright, you are also about to offer up your vows at the altar of Hymen. We have both been younger than we are now, so—I repeat it—I congratulate you.

BARON. You are most kind to wish me God-speed in this most important action of my life. Yes ; I love with all the fervor of which the human heart is capable.

FURIJ. Good, good, my dear baron ! Lovers are pretty much alike : when there is hope they are all fire. When is the great event to happen ?

BARON. That depends somewhat upon yourself.

FURIJ. What do you mean ? What can I do for you ?

BARON. See in what loving harmony we come to you,—our second father ? [*He takes ROZA's hand and leads her forward.*] See, we jointly beg you for your blessing on our union ?

FURIJ. How, Roza, do you really mean to say that you love this man ? [*Aside.*] The million is slipping from my grasp.

ROZA. Dear uncle, you know that I have always loved you as a daughter should love a father——

FURIJ. [*Aside.*] Oh, the cunning serpent !

ROZA. And I feel assured you will gladly see me united to one who has so long loved me faithfully.

FURIJ. [*Aside.*] All is not yet lost. [*To ROZA.*] You think he loves you faithfully. Ha, ha, ha ! I know that he is faithless to you.

BARON. I untrue to her ?

FURIJ. Yes, my dear Rosita, I can prove to you that he loves another.

BARON. Excuse me, dear uncle, but that is impossible, for it is not true.

FOURTH SCENE.

ANZE, MARJETICA, FURIJ, BARON, and ROZA.

FURIJ. [*To the BARON.*] Please to convince yourself, Anze!

ANZE. Here, sir!

FURIJ. Answer me truthfully.

ANZE. Yes, sir.

FURIJ. Do not be afraid of your master: I will protect you.

ANZE. Woe is me!

FURIJ. Has your master another bride or not?

ANZE. Yes, of course he has.

FURIJ. Now, answer, do you think he loves our young lady?

ANZE. I do not think he does.

FURIJ. Answer as if you were standing before a judge. Will you stand up to what you say?

ANZE. No, indeed!

FURIJ. Then you have merely been deceiving me. [*Aside.*] I have lost the million. [*To ROZA and the BARON.*] It is too much! I have been deceived. I will give you over all that belongs to you. In future I will live only for myself.

BARON. If I may be allowed to put in a word here, why can you not help us with your advice and your experience, and live with us as you have done heretofore with Roza?

ROZA. Dear uncle, do not refuse your little Rosita this favor.

FURIJ. [*Aside.*] Would it really be proper for me to remain? [*To ROZA.*] I agree, and will see if the uncle can still be as near to you as he was before he played the lover.

ROZA. Oh, my dear uncle! [*To MARJETICA, showing her the letter.*] Marjetica, did you write that letter?

MARJETICA. Yes, my lady: Anze persuaded me to do it.

BARON. Anze, how did you dare do such a thing?

ANZE. Forgive me, master, if I tried to help the course of true love. This honored lady had fallen in love with you, but as she did not know her own mind, Marjetica determined to try to help her to understand her own feelings.

ROZA. Marjetica has really acted the part of a good providence.

ANZE. Give her to me for my wife.

ROZA. Must we, then, have a double wedding?

MARJETICA. And thus I need not leave my mistress nor he his master.

BARON. I see, Anze, that thou art a most faithful servant.

FURIJ. But *I* have an account to settle with him.

ROZA. Dear uncle, forgive him for my sake.

XIX

THE GARDEN OF THE PARSONAGE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE NORWEGIAN OF ALEXANDER L.
RIELLAND,

BY MRS. FRANCES C. HENDERSON.

It seemed as if spring would never come. Through the whole of April there had been north winds and night frosts, though at noon the sun shone so brightly that a few large flies began to buzz around. A solitary lark even insisted upon it that it was summer; but larks are the most unreliable creatures under heaven, as the first rays of the rising sun often cause them to forget the night frosts. This one rose high above the earth, singing its hymn of praise as it flew upwards and around in large circles, beating time to its own music with its wings. At last it remembered it was hungry, and, folding its wings, it dropped like a stone among the heather.

A lapwing went with small steps among the little hillocks, and nodded thoughtfully as she said "bi litt—bi litt;" she evidently doubted if spring had really come. A couple of ducks were diving into a mudhole. The oldest of them pulled out his head and said, "There must be a good rain before spring could come." He was right. It rained, and then spring came so suddenly that it surprised the lapwing before she had found a suitable place for her nest. She lost her presence of mind, and laid her eggs on the top of a little hillock. That was very silly, and she knew it, but she let them stay there. The lark laughed at her; but the sparrows, who had just come, were in too great a hurry to laugh. They had wasted a whole week sitting on a roof, quarrelling about the almanac, so some of

them had only laid one or two eggs, and some of them had no nests, and now they did not know at which end to begin. They concluded to hold a council in the large rose-bush in the garden of the parsonage, but they did nothing but fly in and out and chatter and scold each other. At last they all flew away and disappeared as suddenly as they had come, but not until some of the males had engaged in a free fight.

Little Ansgarius had been watching the fight with a lively interest. For him it represented a battle, with deeds of knightly prowess. He read with his father the history of the world and the history of Norway, and invested with a warlike hue everything that took place in the garden. When the cows came home in the evening, they were supposed to be troops advancing; the hens were militia, and the cock was Burgomaster Nansen.

Ansgarius was a clever boy, who had his chronology at his fingers' ends; but he had no idea of the lapse of time. He brought Napoleon, Eric Blodøxe, and Tiberius onto the stage together; and he fancied he saw, on the ships sailing lazily by, Tordenskjold fight sometimes with the Vikings, and sometimes with the Spanish armada.

In a secret place behind the summer-house he had hidden a broomstick, which he called Bucephalus. It was his delight to race about the garden with this fiery charger between his legs, and a flower-stalk in his hand. A short distance from the garden was a hill where a few small trees grew, and from which he had an extensive view over the wide heath and the great sea.

He was on his guard against every danger. Sometimes suspicious-looking boats approached the shore, and then, again, powerful bodies of horse were made to advance so cunningly that they looked like a single horseman. But Ansgarius saw through the deceitful plan. He turned Bucephalus suddenly round, and, dashing down the hill, rode into the court-yard in a mad gallop. The hens screamed as if they were going to be killed, and Burgomaster Nansen flew on to the priest's study window.

The priest looked out in time to see Bucephalus's tail as the hero disappeared round the corner, to prepare to repulse the assault.

"What makes the boy so wild?" thought the priest. He

did not relish his warlike tastes. He wanted Ansgarius to be a man of peace, like himself, and it vexed him to see how easily the boy learned and remembered whatever related to war and battles.

Sometimes he tried describing the peaceful life in other countries, but that made no impression on the boy. He was content to abide by his books, and there battle followed battle, the people were all soldiers, the heroes waded in blood, and it proved labor lost when the priest tried to awaken his sympathy for those in whose blood they waded.

Once only did it occur to the priest that it might have been better to store the young head first with peaceful ideas rather than with descriptions of the roving and plundering lives led by our forefathers. Then he remembered that he had studied those very things, and was not he a man of peace? Ansgarius could also become a man of peace,—and if not?

"Well, we are all in the Lord's hand," said the priest, reverently, and he set to work again on his sermon. Presently a blonde head appeared at the door and said, "Father, have you forgotten all about breakfast?"

"You are right, Rebecca," replied he; "I am a whole hour too late," and he went in immediately to the daily room. Father and daughter sat at the breakfast table. Ansgarius always had Thursday to himself, as his father was busy writing his sermon. It would be hard to find two persons more admirably suited to each other than the priest and his eighteen-year-old daughter. She had grown up without a mother's care; but there was so much of a woman's nature in the cheerful, gentle father that the young girl, who barely remembered her mother as a pale face smiling lovingly upon her, looked upon her loss as one remembers a sad dream. And for him, as she expanded, she filled daily better the void which had come into his life; and all the tenderness which, since his wife's death, had been so covered up by sorrow and want, he now laid around the young woman growing up under his hands, and his grief became less and peace came to his inner man.

Really, he could be almost a mother to her. It was from his own pure, quiet stand-point that he taught her to know life. His main object in life was to ward off from her delicate and sensitive nature everything that was impure, all the rest-

less elements which make the world so confused, so dangerous, and so difficult to traverse.

As they stood on the little hill near the parsonage, and looked out on the stormy sea, he would say, "See, Rebecca, such is life; the life on which the children of the world are tossed, where impure passions raise and sink the feeble boat, to throw it at last upon the shore a shapeless wreck. Only he who possesses a strong will and a pure heart can brave the storm, for the waves shall break powerless at his feet."

Rebecca clung to her father's arm; she felt so safe with him. There was such a clearness in all that he said that it seemed like a light shining in front of her when she thought of life. From him she received an answer to all her questions; nothing was too high for him, nothing too insignificant. They exchanged ideas as freely as if they had been brother and sister, still there was one dark point between them. In all other things she went at once to her father with her questions; but here she chose a roundabout way, without ever getting nearer to the point. She knew what happiness her father had possessed and lost, and she followed with heartfelt sympathy the changing fortunes of the lovers in the books she read aloud in the winter evenings. Her heart comprehended that love, which can bestow the greatest happiness, can also cause the deepest sorrow. But apart from the misery of unrequited affection, she felt that there was a mystery she could not fathom.

Through love's paradise she saw dark figures flitting, debased and ashamed. In one breath, with the holy name of love, were mentioned the worst disgrace and the deepest degradation. Things happened, she knew, among human beings, about which she did not like to think; and when her father had talked about them in words of bitter condemnation, it was long before she dared look him in the face. The father noticed this, and rejoiced over it. He rejoiced that his treasure was like the pure pearl to which dirt will not cleave. As long as he was spared, nothing unclean should approach her. Should he be called away,—“We are all in God's hand.”

“Have you not time to take a walk with me to-day, father?” asked Rebecca, after they had eaten.

“Yes, and I should enjoy it above all things. The weather is delightful, and I have worked so hard that my sermon may be considered finished.”

They stepped onto the green sward before the door, and debated whether they should go down to the heath or follow the road which led to the village. It was a peculiarity of this parsonage that the high road to the village led directly through its court-yard. Suddenly Ansgarius appeared. He was red and heated, and Bucephalus was put to his utmost speed. The boy was waving his sword and shouting, "They are coming! they are coming! three war-chariots full of armed men!"

"Who are coming?" asked Rebecca.

"Three carriages with city people," said Ansgarius, dismounting from his charger, with a cunning look.

"Let us go in, Rebecca," said the priest, turning round. But at this moment the first horses came rapidly up the hill, and as it was really a pretty sight to see carriage after carriage full of bright colors and happy faces drive into the bright sunshine, Rebecca could not help remaining to look. In the first carriage an elderly gentleman and a corpulent lady sat on the back seat; on the front seat was a young lady, and just as they entered the court-yard a young man who sat next to her rose, and, with an apology to the lady on the back seat, leaned over his neighbor and looked out of the carriage window. Rebecca gazed at him fixedly without knowing it.

"It is charming here," cried the young man. The garden of the parsonage stood on the last hill towards the sea, so that the wide, blue horizon became suddenly visible as you entered the court-yard. The gentleman on the back seat looked out also and said, "It is really beautiful; I am glad that you appreciate our peculiar scenery, Mr. Lintzow." At this moment the young man's eyes met Rebecca's. She cast hers down, but he stopped the carriage and cried, "We will remain here."

"That is not possible," said the lady, smiling. "Mr. Lintzow, this is the garden of the parsonage."

"That makes no difference," said the young man, merrily, jumping out of the carriage and calling to those in the other carriages, "Shall we not rest here?"

"Yes, yes," answered a chorus of glad voices, whose owners began to jump out; but the gentleman on the back seat rose and said, with dignity, "No, no, my friends, it is really not possible; we cannot force ourselves upon the priest, whom we do not know. In ten minutes we will reach a house of en-

tainment." He was just giving the order to drive farther when the priest appeared at the door, with a friendly greeting. He knew Consul Hartwig, the most important man in the town, by sight.

"I shall be really pleased to have you rest here," said he; "and as for the view, I can assure you——"

"No, my best Herr Pastor, you are too good; we cannot think of accepting your kind invitation, and I must beg you to excuse these crazy young people," said Mrs. Hartwig, in a despairing tone, as she saw her youngest son, who had been sitting in the last carriage, engaged in a familiar conversation with Ansgarius.

"But I can assure you, madam," said the priest, smiling, "that both my daughter and I will be delighted with so pleasant an interruption of our solitude."

Mr. Lintzow opened the carriage doors with a formal bow. Consul Hartwig looked at his wife, and she at him. The priest came forward and renewed his invitation, and the end was that the party followed, half unwillingly and half laughingly, into the garden parlor.

Here renewed excuses and presentations followed. The party consisted of Consul Hartwig's children and a few of their young friends. The excursion had been made chiefly to gratify Mr. Lintzow, who was a friend of the oldest son, and was on a visit of a few days at the consul's.

"My daughter Rebecca," said the priest, introducing her, "who will do her best in all sobriety to——"

"No; do you know what, Herr Pastor," said the lively Mrs. Hartwig, earnestly, "that is going too far. That incurable Mr. Lintzow and my crazy sons have succeeded in forcing us into your house and home, but I am not going to give up the last remnant of my independence. I will play the hostess, gentlemen! unpack the carriage. And you, my dear child," said she to the priest's daughter, "you shall amuse yourself with the young people. Let me take your place as house-keeper;" and the good woman looked at the pretty Rebecca with her honest gray eyes, and patted her cheek.

That felt so good; there was something peculiar in the mere touch of the fat woman's bare hand. The tears nearly came into Rebecca's eyes, and she stood still as if she expected that the strange lady would take her round the neck and whisper

in her ear something for which she had long waited. But the conversation went further. The young men brought, amid increasing rejoicing, all sorts of wonderful packages from the carriages. Mrs. Hartwig threw her mantle on a chair, and arranged things with much taste; but the young people, with Mr. Lintzow at their head, seemed determined to bring in as much disorder as possible. Even the priest seemed to be infected with the merriment; and Rebecca saw him, to her unspeakable edification, help Mr. Lintzow to hide a large paper bundle under Mrs. Hartwig's mantle.

At last it was too much for the old lady. "My dear Miss Rebecca," said she, "is there not something remarkable to see in the neighborhood,—the farther the better,—so that I can get rid of these crazy people for one short hour?"

"There is a fine view from Kongshongen, and the strand, and the sea."

"Let us go to the sea," said Mr. Lintzow.

"That is right," said the lady; "if you will rid me of him I can get along, for he is the worst one of all."

"If Miss Rebecca will lead the way I will follow, wherever it may be," said the young man, with a bow.

Rebecca blushed. She had never heard anything of the kind before. The young, handsome man bowed so low before her, and his words had the accent of truth. She had no time to study her impressions, as the glad crowd rushed out of the house and up the little hill, called Kongshongen. Many years ago some simple antiquities were found at the top, and a predecessor in office had planted some hardy trees on the slopes. Besides these, and an avenue of nut-trees in the garden, there was not another tree within miles, on the steep slopes by the open sea. In the course of time, spite of the storms and wind-blown sand, they had grown to the height of a man, and bending their knotty and bare stems as if to avoid the north winds, they stretched their longing arms towards the south. Among the trees Rebecca's mother had planted violets.

"How charming!" cried the oldest Miss Hartwig. "See, here are violets, Mr. Lintzow! Please to pick me a bouquet for this evening." The young man, who had been trying to find some topic upon which he could converse with Rebecca, noticed that she seemed startled by Miss Frederika's words. "Are

these violets favorites of yours?" said he, in a low voice. She looked at him with surprise. How could he know that?

"Do you not think, Miss Hartwig," said he, "that it would be more to the purpose to pick the flowers just before our departure?—they will be fresher."

"As you please," replied she, shortly.

"We may hope she will forget it by that time," said he to himself, half aloud.

Rebecca heard it, and wondered what pleasure he could find in protecting her violets, rather than in picking them for the handsome lady.

After they had sufficiently admired the extensive view from the summit of the hill, the company followed a foot-path which led to the sea. The young people held a lively conversation as they wandered along the hard smooth beach. At first Rebecca was quite bewildered; it was as if these joyous city people spoke a language which she did not understand. At one time it seemed to her as if they laughed at nothing, and then again she often felt like laughing at their *naïve* admiration of everything they saw, and the simple questions they asked. But in a short time she felt quite at her ease among the good, kindly people. The youngest Miss Hartwig passed her arm round her neck as they walked. Rebecca soon thawed, and talked and laughed as freely as the others, but she was far from noticing that the young men, and especially the stranger, paid her a great deal of attention; and the piquant words which flew here and there in the conversation were as unintelligible to her as much else that was said.

For a while they amused themselves running down to the water's edge, as the waves retreated, to fly back as they advanced again, and great was the rejoicing when one of the gentlemen was overtaken, or when a wave, larger than the others, covered them with foam.

"See! mamma is afraid we shall be too late for the ball," cried Miss Hartwig, suddenly, and they discovered that the consul and his wife, and the priest were standing on the parsonage hill like three windmills, waving handkerchiefs and napkins. They turned their steps homeward. Rebecca took them by a short cut over the marsh, without reflecting that city ladies could not jump, as she did, from mound to mound. Miss Frederika took too short a jump in her tight-laced dress,

and fell into a wet hole. She screamed and called for help, with her eyes fastened on Mr. Lintzow.

"But, Henry," called Max to young Hartwig, who was nearer than he, "why do you not help your sister?" Miss Frederika helped herself, and the expedition proceeded. The table was set in the garden, and although so early in the spring, it was warm enough in the sunshine. When all were seated, Mrs. Hartwig cast a last glance over the table. "But, but—" said she, "there is something wanting. I am confident that I saw the maid put up some birds; dear Frederika! do you not remember it too?"

"Excuse me mother! but you know I never attend to the eating." Rebecca looked at her father, so did Lintzow; and the priest made a face upon which even Ansgarius could read guilt. "I cannot believe," said the lady, "that you, Herr Pastor, are in the conspiracy." But he had to laugh and confess amidst great hilarity, when the boys brought forth in triumph the bundle of birds. Consul Hartwig was enchanted to find that even a clerical gentleman could join in a joke; and the priest was in gayer spirits than he had been for years.

In the course of conversation some one remarked that the dishes were too city-like, though the arrangement was very rural. "For a meal in the country one *must* have curdled milk."

Rebecca rose immediately and asked leave to bring a circle of thick milk, and left the table without listening to Mrs. Hartwig's objections.

"Let me help you, miss!" cried Max, and ran after her.

"That is a lively young man," said the priest.

"Is he not?" replied the consul; "and such a devilish clever merchant besides. He has spent several years in foreign countries, and has just been taken into partnership by his father."

"He seems a little uncertain," said Miss Hartwig, hesitatingly.

"He certainly is!" sighed Miss Frederika.

The young man followed Rebecca to the dairy. She did not exactly like that, as the dairy was her pride; but he asked such funny questions, and laughed so merrily, that she was obliged to laugh also. She selected a milk circle on the upper shelf, and raised her arm to take it down.

"No, no, miss; that is too high for you!" cried Max; "let me take it down," and he put his hand upon hers.

Rebecca drew her hand away instantly, but she felt that she blushed, and she would have liked to cry. He looked down and said, respectfully, "I beg your pardon, Miss Rebecca, I feel that my manners are too free for a woman like yourself, but I should be sorry if you were to deem me the frivolous puppy which I seem to be. Many persons affect gayety to hide that they are suffering, and there are those who laugh to keep from crying."

As he said the last words, he looked up. There was something so sad and, at the same time, so respectful in his look, that Rebecca suddenly felt as if she had been hard upon him. She was in the habit of taking down pans from the upper shelf, but as she reached again after the milk-circle, she dropped her arms and said, "It is really rather high for me."

A slight smile passed over his face. He took down the pan, and carried it carefully. She accompanied him, and opened the doors for him. Every time he passed her she looked at him closely. His coat, his cravat, everything was so different from her father; and his clothes exhaled a perfume unknown to her. When they reached the door, he stopped and said, with a melancholy smile, "I must take a moment's time to lay my face in merry folds, so that no one shall suspect anything."

With these words he entered the room, and went up to the table with a merry joke. She had remained outside, but she heard the shouts of laughter which answered him.

Poor young man! How sorry she felt for him, and how strange it was that she should be the only person in whom he seemed to confide. Had he also lost his mother, or had he a still deeper sorrow? How gladly she would help him if she knew how! Later, as Rebecca joined the party again, he was the gayest of the gay. Only once, when he looked at her, she thought his eyes wore the same melancholy, half begging expression, and it pierced her to the heart to hear him laugh at the same moment.

At last the guests departed, with a hearty leave-taking on both sides. But, during the final choosing of places and stowing away bundles, Rebecca slipped into the house and out of it through the garden, to the Kongshongen. There she sat down under the trees, by her mother's violets, to collect her thoughts.

"But the violets, Mr. Lintzow," said Miss Frederika, when all were comfortably seated. The young man had been looking anxiously for the daughter of the house, and answered absently, "I am afraid it is too late."

Suddenly he seemed to have an inspiration. "Ah!" said he, "Mrs. Hartwig, you will surely excuse me if I run to pick a bouquet for Miss Frederika. I will be back in two minutes."

Rebecca heard a rapid step approaching; she thought it must be he.

"Oh! I find you here, miss. I came to pick the violets." She turned half away, and began to pick.

"Are you picking them for me?" said he, with an unsteady voice.

"Are they not for Miss Frederika?"

"Oh, no! let them be for me," said he, and he knelt by her side.

His voice sounded as disconsolate as that of a begging child.

She handed him the violets without looking up. He seized her round the waist, and drew her towards him. She did not struggle, but shut her eyes; then she felt that he kissed her—once, many times—on the eyes and mouth; then he called her by her name, and whispered honeyed words; then he kissed her again. Then there were loud calls from the garden. He let her go, and ran down the hill. The horses were stamping; the young man jumped quickly into the carriage, and it rolled off; but when he shut the carriage-door, he was so awkward as to drop the bouquet; a single violet remained in his hand.

"I suppose it would be of no use to offer you this one, miss," said he.

"Thank you, no; you can keep it to remind you of your dexterity," replied Miss Hartwig, in anything but a gracious tone.

"Yes; you are right! I will do it," replied Max Lintzow, with great tranquillity.

The morning after the ball, when Mr. Lintzow put on his every-day coat, he found a certain violet in his button-hole. He pinched off the head with his fingers, and pulled it out backwards.

"It is really true," said he, looking at himself in the glass,

with a smile. "I had almost forgotten *her*." That afternoon he went home, and so he forgot her *entirely*.

Summer came, with its warm days and its long light nights. All over the quiet sea lay the smoke in dark streaks behind the passing steamboats. Sailboats went by with flapping sails, and required nearly the whole day to pass out of the horizon.

It was some time before the priest remarked a change in his daughter, but little by little the conviction was forced upon him that Rebecca was not thriving that summer. She was pale, and spent much of her time in her own room. She hardly ever came into his study, and at last it even seemed to him as if she avoided him.

He spoke seriously with her, and begged her to tell him if scruples of any sort were to blame for her not being as joyous as formerly. Tears were her only answer.

After this conversation she did better. She did not remain so much alone, and joined her father oftener, but the glad ring was wanting in her voice, and her eyes were no longer so bright. The doctor came and questioned her. She blushed scarlet, and wept so violently that the old man left her room and sought the priest in his study.

"Well, doctor, what do you say about Rebecca?"

"Tell me, Herr Pastor," was his reply, "has your daughter had any violent moral emotion? Hm—any——?"

"Any worry or vexation, do you mean?"

"No, not exactly; but has she no trouble of the heart? To speak plainly, has she had any unfortunate love-affair?"

The priest felt quite hurt at this question. How could the doctor believe for a moment that his own Rebecca, whose heart was for him like an open book, should have a care that she could or would hide from her father? Moreover, Rebecca was not one of those girls whose heads are filled with romantic dreams of love; besides which, she had never been away from home, and how could she? "No! no! my dear doctor! this diagnosis does you little credit," said the priest, with a quiet smile.

"Yes, yes, it is easy to talk," said the old man; and he wrote a prescription which could not do any harm. He did not know any herbs that were good for a sore heart, but he silently held fast to his diagnosis.

The doctor's visit had frightened Rebecca. She watched over herself still more carefully, and doubled her efforts to appear as she had been. No one should suspect what had happened,—that a young man, a total stranger, had taken her in his arms and kissed her,—many times.

As often as she remembered this she blushed scarlet. She washed herself certainly ten times a day, but it seemed to her she could never be cleansed. And what was it that had really happened? was it not the greatest disgrace? Was she any better than the unfortunate girls of whose *faux pas* she had heard with horror, and for whom she could make no excuse? Ah! if she could only ask any one; if light could be thrown on the darkness and doubt which distressed her so; if she could see clearly what it was she had done; if she could know if she still had a right to look her father in the eyes, or if she was one of the worst of sinners.

Her father asked her often if she would not confide to him what troubled her, for he felt that she concealed something from him. But when she looked in his clear eyes, in the pure and placid face, she felt that it would be impossible to uncover the plague-spot, and she could only weep. Sometimes she thought of the motherly touch of good Mrs. Hartwig's hand; but she was a stranger and far away, so she must fight the battle out by herself, but fight it so silently that no one should be aware of the struggle.

And he,—who was wandering through the world with the glad face and the sad heart,—should she never see him again? And if she ever did meet him, how should she hide herself? He was incorporated with all her doubt and suffering, but without bitterness, without rancor. All that she suffered bound her more closely to him, and he was never absent from her thoughts.

In her housekeeping Rebecca was as careful and attentive as ever, but in everything that she did she caught a glimpse of him. Countless places in the house and garden reminded her of him: she saw him in the doorway,—it was there he stood when he spoke to her first; but on Kongshongen she had not been again,—it was there he had put his arm round her waist and kissed her.

The priest thought much and sorrowfully over his daughter's

condition ; but every time he remembered the doctor's suggestion he shook his head indignantly. How could he think that the nimble hand of a cunning fencer should pierce the good armor with which he had provided her ?

If the spring had been late, autumn had come early. One warm summer evening it began to rain ; the next day it rained also, then it rained unceasingly for eleven days and nights, the weather growing colder and colder all the time. At last it cleared up, but the next night there were four degrees of cold of Réaumur. The leaves sparkled on the bushes and trees till the high wind strewed them over the ground. It was the young autumn wind who was trying his strength ; in the winter, when he had full-grown lungs, he would play with tiles and chimney-shafts. All the force on the farm was busy housing the grain and the straw. The oat-straw lay in heaps in the court-yard, and the wind, catching up straws, whirled them round in a merry dance.

A sparrow sat on the top of the dog-kennel. He had drawn his head between his feathers, winked with his eyes, and seemed to be nodding ; but in reality he was watching where they were storing the grain. He had been in the great sparrow council in the spring, and had chattered and screamed as much as any of them. But since then he had become reasonable, and thought of his wife and children, and how nice it is to have something in reserve for the winter.

Ansgarius was looking joyfully forward to the winter, to dangerous expeditions in snow-storms, and pitch-dark nights, with crashing breakers. He was already using the thin ice which covered the little water-pools, as he made all his tin soldiers march over it, with two brass cannon. He took part, however, against the expedition, by stamping with his foot till the ice gave way, and the whole army disappeared in the puddle. Only one cannon-wheel was to be seen. Then he swung his cap and shouted hurrah !

"What are you shouting for?" said the priest, who was crossing the yard.

"I am playing Austerlitz," said Ansgarius, with a radiant face.

The father went on, but he sighed deeply, he did not understand his own children. Rebecca sat in the sunshine, on a bench in the garden. She was looking across the heath,

which was covered with dark purple flowers, though the fields were turning pale at the approach of autumn.

The lapwings had assembled, and were silently executing flying manœuvres before undertaking their journey; and all the strand birds had come to travel with them. Even the lark had taken courage and sought travelling companions among other gray migratory birds. But the gull was quiet: it did not intend to go away.

All was so still, and only a faint breath of air was stirring. Both colors and sounds were growing feebler at the approach of winter, and that was in harmony with her own mood. She was tired, and dreaded the long, dead winter. She knew that her winter would be longer than that of the others, and she began even to dread the spring. The birds would return and sing the old songs with new voices, and up on the Kongshongen her mother's violets would once more stand in blue clusters. It was there he had put his arm around her waist and kissed her many, many times.

XX.

ALEXANDER LAPUSHNA.

A FRAGMENT OF THE HISTORY OF MOLDAVIA, TRANSLATED
FROM THE ROUMAN,

BY MRS. FRANCES C. HENDERSON.

JACOB ERACLID, surnamed the tyrant, was murdered by Stefan Tomsa, who governed the land until he was overthrown by Alexander Lapushna. This prince, who had been obliged to flee to Constantinople, succeeded in raising troops, and, having twice defeated the army of the tyrant, set to work to drive the usurper Stefan out of the country. The latter would, however, not have lost the throne if his bojars had not betrayed him. Alexander entered Moldavia with an army of seven thousand spahis and three thousand volunteers. Besides, he had an imperial order to the Khan of the Tartars to give him any assistance he might require.

One day Lapushna was riding alongside of the prime minister, Bogdan. Both were armed from head to foot, and mounted on fine Turkish stallions.

"What do you think, Bogdan," said the prince, after a long silence; "do you seem to have accomplished anything?"

"Your grace may rest assured of that," replied the courtier; "the land is groaning under Stefan's yoke. The whole army will come over to you, if you promise the soldiers better pay. The bojars, all those whom he has left alive, will join you as soon as they find that you are strong enough to protect them against their master, as it is only the fear of death which prevents them from revolting at once."

"May God grant that I shall never have to do what Prince

Mircea did in the mountains. I tell you I know our bojars, I have lived among them."

Conversing thus they reached Tecuci, where they meant to rest a while in the shade.

"Master," said an executor, drawing near, "some bojars have arrived and demand an audience."

"Bring them in," replied Alexander.

Four bojars immediately entered the tent where he was sitting, surrounded by his bojars and captains. Two of the newcomers were young men, two were older. Their names were Motoc, prime minister; Veverita, secretary of state; General Spancioc, and Stroici.

Drawing near to Prince Alexander they inclined their heads to the ground, but without kissing the hem of his garment, as was customary.

"You are welcome, bojars," said the prince, forcing a smile.

"Long life to your grace," was their answer.

"I have heard," said Alexander, "of the troubles in the land, and am come to quiet them, and I expect to be received with open arms."

"Your grace is much mistaken," said Motoc. "The country is quiet, and our people have sent us to beg you to retrace your steps, and to leave the country."

"If you do not want me, I want you," said Alexander, and his blue eyes shone like lightning. "If you do not love me, I love you; and I will free you from a usurper, whether you will or not. You might as well ask the Danube to run backwards towards its source. Do you understand me?"

"They do not cut off the heads of ambassadors," quietly remarked Spancioc; "it is our duty to tell you the truth. The bojars are determined to take refuge in Hungary and in Poland (or to hide in the mountains), where they have relations and friends. You bring an army of strangers into this poor country, and make war upon us, and think you are doing us a favor because our Lord Stefan Tomsa——"

"Tomsa! How dare you speak thus?" said Bogdan, putting his hand on the hilt of his sword. "I would like to knock your teeth down your throat. That rascal of a Tomsa, indeed!"

"Call not the anointed of the Lord a rascal," said Veverita.

"Am I not the Lord's anointed as well as he?" said Alexander. "Whom have I oppressed? Whose blood have I spilt?"

"Your grace must see," said Stroici, "that there is great danger of your pagan hordes pillaging the land. With what are you going to satisfy their rapacity?"

"With *your* goods," replied the prince, "not with the money of the poor peasants, whom you have already drained nearly dry. But enough of this, bojars; return to him who sent you, and tell him to be on his guard, lest I should make flutes out of his bones, and cover drums with his skin."

The three other bojars marched out with downcast looks, but Motoc remained.

"For what have you remained?" said Alexander.

"Master! master!" said Motoc, falling on his knees, "have pity on our poor country! Dismiss your army of infidels, and trust to our own Moldavians, who will not suffer a hair to fall from your head!"

"It seems," replied the prince, "that you do not know me, or you think I do not know you. Remember the Moldavian proverb,—'The wolf changes his hair, but not his nature.' Veverita is an old enemy of mine. Spancioc is young, but I like his daring. Stroici is like a child, who, if you threaten it, has recourse to a lie. But you, Motoc, you have grown old in the business, you flatter your masters, but you betrayed Eraclid, and now you would sell Tomsa; but you must remember that you are not standing before a fool. As soon as I saw you I knew you had come to deceive me, but I will not stain my sword with your blood. You may be useful to me, as the maledictions of the people will fall upon *your* head."

Motoc kissed his hand, imitating the dog who licks the hand which strikes it, instead of biting. He knew that Alexander did not love traitors, and he was glad even to be tolerated.

Tomsa was too indolent to defend himself against his enemies, and fled to Wallachia, so that the prince found no impediments in his way. Everywhere the people came to meet him with joy and gladness, hoping to find in him a good master. He had not yet shown the dark side of his character. The bojars trembled, and with good cause. The people hated them, and the new master did not love them.

Alexander had no sooner got possession of the land than he ordered all the strong fortresses to be burnt in that part of Moldavia, so as to prevent the discontented from seeking shelter within their walls. It was also a great blow at the

feudal power of the bojars. He was not, however, satisfied with this, but seized the least cause of complaint against one of their number, as a pretext for having his head cut off, and nailed over his own gate, where it remained till it rotted. No one dared to raise hand or voice against him. He was always surrounded by a guard of Albanians, Servians, and Hungarians. These men, who had fled from their country for diverse crimes, were not only protected by Alexander, but well paid. The Moldavian army was placed under creatures of his own, who did pretty much as they pleased.

One day he was alone in the hall of his palace. He was walking up and down, after a long consultation with Motoc, who had been received into high favor. He seemed uneasy, but perhaps it was only because he was meditating new murders. Suddenly a side door opened, and Lady Ruscanda entered the hall. The chroniclers tell us that after the death of her father, the good Petru Rares, she remained in a tender age, under the guardianship of two older brothers, Iliam and Stefan. The former succeeded his father on the throne, but after a short and scandalous reign, he went to Constantinople, where he turned Mahometan, leaving the crown to his brother Stefan. He was even worse than Iliam; he tried to compel the Roman Catholics to abjure their religion, and reduced many wealthy families of that persuasion to absolute poverty. The bojars joined these in a plot to kill him, as if they had delayed doing so, they would certainly all have been killed by him. No one was allowed to live with him, except his sister, as he did not apprehend any attempt to assassinate him, and the bojars, who were standing near him in his tent, cut the ropes to prevent him from escaping, and, falling upon him, killed him.

The murderers gave the crown to one Talde, who was the only male relation of Petru Rares left, and under him they opposed the progress of Alexander. This prince defeated him, and took him prisoner, and, after cutting off his nose, compelled him to enter a monastery. Ruscanda being now the only surviving member of Petru Rares's family, Alexander forced her to marry him, hoping she would give him some of the popularity her extreme beauty had won for her.

When Lady Ruscanda entered she was attired with an elegance befitting the daughter, sister, and wife of a sovereign.

Over a skirt of cloth of gold she wore a jacket of blue velvet, with a border of ermine. A girdle of gold was round her waist, fastened by a clasp, rich with precious stones, and on the hooks of her necklace of coins were hung rows of large pearls. Her ermine headdress was adorned by flowers made of emeralds, and from under this cap her hair fell upon her shoulders in two thick plaits, according to the fashion of that time. Truly she was fair to look upon, though she was sad and pensive, reminding one of a flower withered by excessive heat.

Drawing near to the prince, she bent her head and kissed his hand. He put his arm round her waist and made her sit down on his knee, and kissed her on the forehead.

"What is it, fair lady," said he; "what weighty matter has brought thee out so early on a fête-day?"

"The tears of the widows whom you have made, which have fallen on my hands. God and the holy Virgin will demand of you an account of the blood you have spilt."

Alexander withdrew his arm, and Ruscanda fell down at his feet.

"Oh, my lord!" cried she, "think how many widows and orphans you have made, how many rich men you have reduced to poverty. Can you not abdicate and give up all? There is no longer any war; the country is quiet and submissive. Remember that death comes to all alike, and after death is the day of judgment. Enter a monastery, then you will not have to stand alone before an angry God."

"Fool!" screamed Alexander, jumping to his feet. For a moment he seemed about to strangle her with her own girdle; but controlling himself with difficulty, he bent over her, and, forcing himself to speak calmly, he said, "My lady! never let me hear such silly words from your mouth again, as there is no knowing what might happen. Has not the church made saints of men who were worse than I am? Be quiet for the sake of our expected child."

"It is for our child's sake that I will not have the curses of widows and orphans resting on our heads. Yesterday, as I was driving out, a woman with five children stopped my carriage. 'Look there,' said she, pointing to a ghastly head, rotting over a doorway, 'see what your husband has done to mine. Yes, that is my husband, and the father of these little

ones.' Oh! master, I am frightened, that bloody head is ever before my eyes!"

"What do you fear?" said Alexander, smiling.

"I am afraid that if you cease spilling blood and cutting off heads, your turn will come next."

"Don't worry yourself," replied Alexander. "I will give them a fright."

"How can you do that?"

"You shall see to-morrow; but now, dear lady, go home and set your house in order, and prepare a banquet worthy of bojars."

Lady Ruscanda went out, and, after kissing her husband's hand, he accompanied her to the door, and called his squire. "Order the carriage and dress me," said he to him.

He knew that the bojars would be assembled in the cathedral to hear mass, as this was a saint's day. When Alexander entered the cathedral the holy service had begun, and the bojars were assembled. Contrary to his usual habit, he was attired with lordly pomp. He wore the crown of the Paleologues, and over a Polish dolman of crimson velvet, a rich Turkish pelisse. He wore no other arms than a sword suspended to a belt of gold.

After mass, Alexander left his seat, and bowed to the picture of the saint, then approaching the reliquary of St. John, he prostrated himself with great humility, and kissed the holy relics. They relate that in that moment the prince's face was as yellow as a lemon, and that the lid of the reliquary nearly flew open.

After performing this act of worship the prince mounted his throne again, and, turning to the bojars, he said,—

"My lords and nobles, I have come here to-day to confess my sins. I have shed a great deal of blood, but God only knows how deeply I regret it, and how I abhor myself for it. I know you thirst for vengeance, but I am here to propose a cessation of hostilities. I would like to be a good shepherd to this flock, as the prophet says, 'I will strike the shepherd and disperse the flock.' My lord nobles, I wish henceforth to live in peace and in brotherly love with all men, for the law of love says, 'Thou shalt love even those who hate thee.' We are all mortal, and beg our Lord Jesus Christ [here he

crossed himself] to forgive us our offences, as we forgive those who have offended us."

Having finished this extraordinary harangue, he bowed right and left, and invited the bojars to come that evening to celebrate their reconciliation in a banquet at the palace.

"The Lord be with your grace," replied all the bojars, except two. These were young men who were leaning thoughtfully against a monument, without any one's having noticed them. These were Spancioc and Stroici.

"Are you going?" said one of the older bojars after the crowd had dispersed.

"No," replied Spancioc; "and I would advise you not to trust yourself at the prince's table."

Great preparations were made at court for the banquet. The news had spread quickly that Alexander had made peace with the bojars. These rejoiced greatly over the turn affairs had taken, and at the prospect of being restored to their former high positions at court; but the populace cared but little about the matter. The people had recognized the rule of Prince Alexander, and it made no difference to them whether Motoc or another governed under him. They were sure to be oppressed in any way.

At the appointed hour the bojars came. Each one was attended by two or three servants. They were surprised to see the court-yard full of armed men. Some would gladly have turned back, but the guards at the gate denied them egress. Four loaded cannon commanded the approach, but that might be only to celebrate the occasion.

When all the bojars were assembled,—forty-seven in number,—they were desired to take their seats. Alexander sat at the head of the table, the *logafet* Trotusan was at his right hand, and Minister Motoc at his left. After all had smoked, the dishes were brought in.

In Moldavia at that time they had not introduced many foreign dishes. After a *borshut* (a sour soup) came diverse boiled meats and vegetables swimming in butter, then a Turkish pilan, and lastly fried cakes. The table-cloth and napkins were of fine homespun linen, but the dishes, plates, and goblets were of solid silver. Jugs filled with costly wines were ranged along the walls; and behind every bojar stood a servant of the prince, armed to the teeth. Wine stood by every place,

and the meats were boiled in wine. The bojars began to drink ; and it was not long before the strong wines began to work. The bojars bowed low and shouted, "Long live Prince Alexander !" and the thunder of the cannon answered them from the court-yard.

When the prince was about to leave the table Veverita rose, goblet in hand, and bowing low, said, "Your grace ! may God grant you to govern the land many years in peace, if you govern well ; but if you oppress the people and weaken the bojars——"

Before he could finish a man-at-arms stepped up to him and felled him with a club. "Ah ! you insult your master !" cried he. "To the rescue, my men !"

In a moment all the servants of the bojars ran in, drawing their knives ; but the captain of the body-guards ordered his men to attack them, and they were obliged to withdraw. Then they charged the bojars. One may imagine the horror of the scene. The bojars had gone in good faith, without suspicion and without arms. The older ones died quietly, making the sign of the cross ; but the younger ones defended themselves with whatever they could lay hold of. Chairs, plates, and table-knives became dangerous weapons in their hands. Some of the wounded, as they were about to fall, bit with such fury into the throats of their assailants that these died of suffocation. More than one sold his life dearly, and many of the guards were killed, but there was not one of the forty-seven bojars who escaped. During the carnage the prince was standing in the embrasure of a window, laughing. He had a tight hold of the hand of Motoc, whose hair was standing on end with horror, and whose teeth were chattering. The floor of the banqueting-room was covered with blood, mixed with the red wine from the jugs which had been broken in the fight.

When the guards had finished their bloody work within, they went out into the court-yard and attacked the servants, but some of those forced the gates and fled. The fearful tidings were carried to the houses of the bojars, and spread like wildfire among the populace. A large party of men, headed by the relations of the murdered men, marched up to the palace and began to chop the gate with their axes. The tumult was increasing every moment, and the soldiers,

who were all stupefied with drink, could offer but little resistance.

Alexander sent his squire to ask what the people wanted; and, turning to Motoc, said to him, "Do you not think I did well to rid the country of all these wicked men?"

"Your grace has acted wisely," replied the flatterer; "and I had even thought of suggesting something of the kind, but your grace was beforehand with me. You have done well to cut off their heads, seeing—as how."

"What say you?" interrupted Alexander. "Would it not be well to order the cannon to be fired on the populace?"

"Yes, yes; by all means, fire on the common people,—who cares for them; but it is really a pity for the bojars; they are all gone!"

"I expected just such an answer from you," said the prince, severely.

In the mean time the squire was parleying with the people at the gate. "What is it you want, my good friends," said he.

"The head of the traitor Motoc," replied the people.

"What do they want?" said Alexander, as the man-at-arms returned.

"The head of the prime minister Motoc," was his reply.

"What?" said Motoc, jumping as if he had trod upon a snake. "You did not hear well, comrade, or you are joking. Of what use would my head be to them? You did not hear aright."

"Yes, he did," said the prince. "Listen, you can hear them now." And in truth the cries of the people were distinctly heard,—*"Give us Motoc, we want the head of Motoc!"*

"Oh! holy Virgin!" cried Motoc, "do not abandon me! Deliver me from this danger, and I swear to give your church a silver image like the one which works miracles at the monastery. Gracious master! you surely will not listen to the people. I am a real bojar, and what are they but common men?"

"They are common, but they are many," said Alexander, coldly. "Would it not be ridiculous in me to prefer one to many?"

"Oh, have pity on me!" said Motoc, who understood but too well that there was no hope for him. "Have pity on my

wife and children! Give me a confessor!" and he pulled out his beard by the roots, as he groaned and lamented.

"Stop that," said the prince; "and die like a Roman. What could a confessor do for you? You are a robber and a traitor. All Moldavia knows that. Holloo! take him and give him to the people, and say that it is thus Alexander rewards traitors."

The squire and the captain of the guards immediately seized Motoc. He wished to defend himself, but what could his old arm do against the two strong young men who held him? In his struggles his foot slipped on the bloody pavement, and he fell on his face. The two men picked him up, and carried him out more dead than alive. They opened the gate and gave him to the waiting crowd outside, saying, "It is thus Prince Alexander rewards traitors."

"Long life to his grace, the prince!" shouted the crowd; and they went off, carrying their victim with them.

While the miserable Motoc was dying in this way, Prince Alexander was busy cutting off, with a large carving-knife, the heads of the murdered bojars. His attendants threw the headless bodies out of the window, and the prince made a pyramid of the bloody heads in the middle of the table. Then, after washing his hands, he drew the bolts and bars of the side door, and opening it, went into his wife's apartments.

Lady Ruscanda had been on her knees before the holy Icon (image) since the beginning of this tragedy. She heard the noise, but did not know what it meant, and dared not leave her rooms, to which the customs of the day confined her, and her servants had no wish to risk their own lives by going to the scene of the affray. The good lady had a great dread of popular fury, and when Alexander entered the room she exclaimed, "Praise be to the Mother of God that I see you alive! Oh! I have been horribly afraid."

"You may remember I promised you a remedy for fear; come with me, my lady."

"But those screams, those yells which I heard?"

"Oh! that is nothing. The servants had got into a quarrel, but they have settled it among themselves." Speaking thus, he took Ruscanda's hand and led her to the banqueting room.

As soon as the fearful spectacle met her eyes, she gave a wild scream and fainted.

"Woman will be woman," said Alexander, smiling. "A trifle makes them happy, and a trifle frightens them;" and he carried her back to her apartments. He returned presently, and said to the captain of the guards, "See that all those heads are properly fastened on the walls; and you"—to his squire—"go and fetch me Spancioc and Stroici."

But Stroici and Spancioc were safe in Nistru. They had passed the frontier before their enemies got sight of them.

Four years had passed, during which Prince Alexander had faithfully kept the promise he had made to Lady Ruscanda, not to cut off the head of another bojar. But he had indemnified himself by inflicting upon them all imaginable tortures. He put out the eyes, or cut off the ears, nose, or hands of any one who was accused or even suspected of dissatisfaction. Still he could not feel easy unless he had secured Spancioc and Stroici, who were quietly biding their time in voluntary exile. They had two brothers who held influential positions at the court of Poland, and Alexander greatly feared that they would bring Polish troops into Moldavia; but the two bojars were too patriotic for that. The prince wrote to them repeatedly, binding himself by the most sacred oaths not to do them any harm if they returned to their own country, but they knew too well what reliance was to be placed upon his oaths. In the mean time he fortified his capital, but he soon was taken with a malignant fever, which made rapid progress. In his accessions of delirium he felt himself surrounded by his victims, who pointed at him with their bloody fingers and threatened him with the judgment of God.

At last Alexander summoned the metropolitan, the bishops, and some bojars, and told them that he felt his end was approaching. He humbled himself so far as to ask them to allow his son Bogdan to succeed him on the throne, and to aid him in maintaining himself there. He said that, if he recovered from that sickness, he meant to take the vows in the Slatina monastery, so as to secure the salvation of his soul, and he begged the metropolitan (in case he should not recover) to put a monk's gown on him when he saw him in the agony of—

He could not utter the last word. A violent convulsion

shook his frame ; and as his body seemed to be growing cold, the metropolitan and bishops, thinking the end had come, hastened to shave his head and to put a monk's gown on him, giving him the name of Paisie, or Peter, who had denied his Master. Then they proclaimed Bogdan as prince, and saluted Lady Ruscanda as regent during her son's minority, after which they sent couriers to the captains of the army and to the exiles.

The day was dawning when Stroici and Spancioc returned. They dismounted at the gate and entered the fortress. Save by the sentinels the streets were deserted. They entered the palace without hindrance, and went to the sick-room without meeting any one. They were about to open the door, when they heard a great noise, so they stopped to listen.

Alexander had awoke from his trance. Opening his eyes he saw two monks standing, one by his pillow, one by his feet, as stiff as two statues of bronze. His own head was covered with a monk's cowl, and long woollen sleeves fell over his hands. Thinking it was all a dream, he closed his eyes again, but even then burning lights, genuflections, cowls, and frocks danced before his eyes.

"How are you, brother Paisie?" said one of the monks, who saw that the patient had recovered consciousness. These words recalled to the prince what he had said to the metropolitan. The blood rushed rapidly through his veins, and half raising himself in bed, he said, angrily, "What nonsense is this? So you have been playing tricks with me. Begone, or I shall kill you." He felt by his side for his weapons, and not finding any, he pulled off his cowl and threw it at one of the monks. Hearing his loud and angry voice, Lady Ruscanda entered with her son. She was followed by the metropolitan, the bojars, and the servants; Stroici and Spancioc were still listening at the other door.

"So you have made a monk of me," cried Alexander, with a hoarse and frightened voice; "but you shall not escape me. God knows my revenge shall be a bloody one."

"Do not blaspheme, miserable man," broke in the metropolitan. "Remember that you are on your death-bed, and have pity on this innocent woman and on this child, in whom are centred the hopes of Moldavia."

"Beware, false priest," said the sick man, trying in vain to

leave his bed, "hold your tongue. I made you a metropolitan, and I will unmake you. I am not a priest. I am still the ruler of this country. I am still Prince Alexander. Holloo! my brave guards, kill them all, and do not let one escape. Ah! I burn!—water! water!" and he fell backwards, roaring with rage.

Lady Ruscanda and the metropolitan went out. Stroici and Spancioc met them at the door. "Lady," said Spancioc, seizing her hand, "that man must die; here is a powder, put it in his drink."

"Is it poison?" said she, growing very red.

"It is poison," replied Spancioc; "but if Alexander lives, he will kill your son, who has been put in his place."

"Oh! I cannot lose my boy!" said Ruscanda, straining the child passionately to her breast.

"What do you say, father?" said the poor woman, turning her weeping eyes to the metropolitan.

"May the Lord God preserve you, my daughter, from this cruel and wicked man," said the metropolitan. "I am going to prepare for the departure of our new master. I leave you with the old one," and he departed.

At that moment a servant brought a silver goblet full of water. Ruscanda took it. Spancioc approached her, dropped the poison into the goblet, and pushed her into the prince's room.

"What is she doing?" asked Spancioc of Stroici, who was looking through a crack in the door.

"The lady trembles,—he asks for drink,—she hands him the goblet,—he drinks!"

Ruscanda came out trembling and looking as pale as a ghost. "You are answerable before God," said she, "for the sin you have made me commit."

The metropolitan returned and said to the lady, "Who is going to nurse this miserable man?"

"We two," replied Spancioc and Stroici, and they went into the sick room.

Alexander was lying on his back, quiet, but very feeble. When the bojars entered he looked at them long and said, "Who are you, and what do you want?"

"I am Spancioc."

"And I am Stroici."

"Oh! my enemies," groaned Alexander.

"Yes. I am Spancioc, who escaped your bloody claws. I am Spancioc, whom you robbed of everything, forcing his wife and children to beg their bread from door to door."

"I feel as if I were burning up," said the prince, laying his hand on his stomach.

"Yes, and you will burn to death. You have taken poison."

"Oh! you impious fellow! You have poisoned me. Oh! Lord, have mercy upon my soul. Where is your mistress? Where is my son?"

"They have gone away and left you with us."

"They have gone and left me, and left me with *you*! Oh! you have a better heart," said Alexander to Stroici. "Take your sword and deliver me from this torture."

"I will not soil my noble sword with the blood of a tyrant."

The pains increased, and the poisoned man was writhing in fearful convulsions. "Oh! give me water," said he, "I am burning up."

"Here," said Spancioc, offering him the silver goblet in which were the dregs of the poison; "drink and refresh yourself."

"I will not drink," said the sick man, setting his teeth.

Stroici seized him and held him firmly while Spancioc separated his teeth with a knife, and, opening his mouth, poured down his throat all that was left in the goblet. Alexander bellowed like a bull which had been wounded with the axe, but not killed, and turned his face to the wall.

"You do not wish to see us," said the bojars, "but you shall; that is part of your punishment;" and seizing him they turned his face round, forcing him to look at them.

The unfortunate prince had dreadful spasms, foam stood on his lips, and his bloodshot eyes were filled with horror and fixed on his executioners until he gave up the ghost. Such was the sad end of Prince Alexander Lapushna, who has left a bloody page in the history of Moldavia. The portraits of himself and family are still to be seen in the Slatina monastery.

